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Life in the occupied area

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LIFE IN THE OCCUPIED AREA

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BY

KATHARINE TYNAN

AUTHOR OF

"THE YEARS OF THE SHADOW," "THE MIDDLE YEARS,"
"MEMORIES," ETC. ETC.

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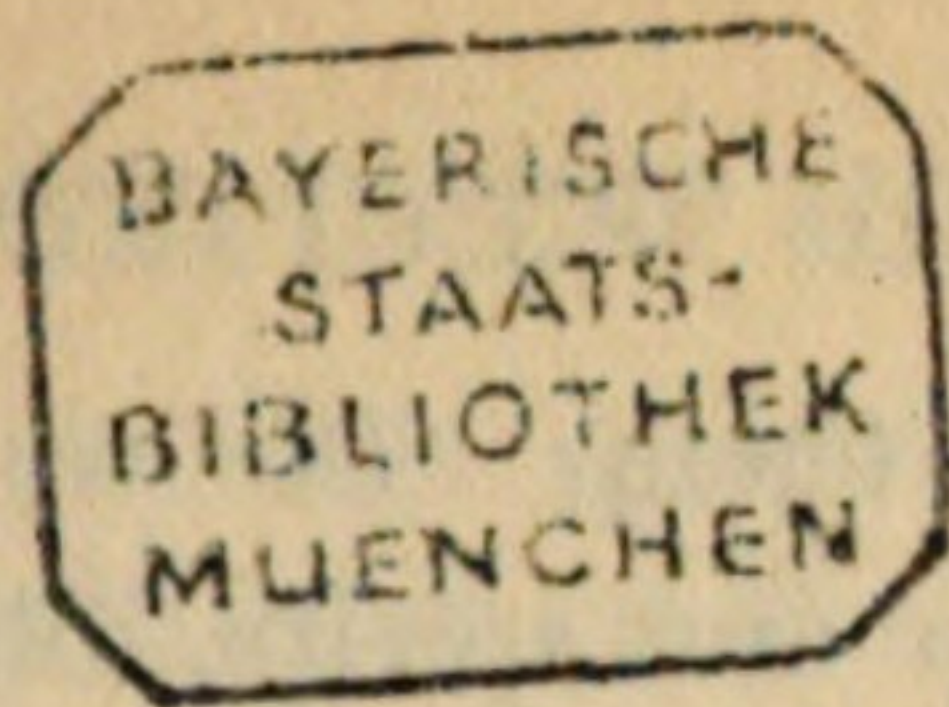
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LIFE IN THE OCCUPIED AREA

CHAPTER I

OUR FIRST COMING

IN the small hours of the morning we stopped at Herbesthal; the name leaped out at me in lit letters against a background of gloom, and I remembered it was on one of the post cards that came day by day from my young soldier-son when he made the great Trek with the 29th Division into Germany after the Armistice.

"You must see all these places one day," he had written, and it seemed little likely then; but the thing had come to pass and the places he knew are familiar places to me now.

We were tremorous and timorous travellers; at least, some of us were, though we did not pretend to be other than brave. We had noticed on a portion of the train at Ostend inscriptions in three languages,—"Reserved for Officers of the Allied Forces." That was reassuring to our simplicity, though we had not observed any officers of the Allied Forces; but, surely, they were somewhere and would come to our assis-

tance if we needed them. So we comforted our hearts and braced up our spirits, blissfully unaware that officially the British Army of the Rhine takes no responsibility whatever for British civilians. We knew later, when the journey had become a simple and easy one to us, that the occasional British officer and the R.T.O.'s, who were oases of comfort when the *douane* had to be faced or there was any prospect of disagreeable things, were apparently quite unaware of the official point of view.

At Aachen, otherwise Aix-la-Chapelle, was the *douane*. Having not so long ago, in unfortunate circumstances even for Modane, been through that frontier for my sins, I am mortally terrified of frontiers and *douaniers*. I do not most emphatically

“Feel the lure of foreign speech,
Of frontiers, in my blood.”

At Modane our Allies had been pitiless torturers. What might we not be going to suffer at the hands of our defeated enemies? That was the question we asked ourselves and withheld from each other as we looked out in the dark of the morning at the frontier station.

At Aachen it was raining. One of us, at least, looked fearfully through the rain and the wind-blown, flickering lights for the shaven heads, the arrogant manner, the faces flown with insolence, that used to come through the smoke of the barrage, images of terror to praying women at home.

There was a strange quietness over everything, utterly unlike the tumult of Modane. Aachen station might have been asleep like the town. Here and there a figure moved through the mist of rain under the flickering lights.

Our intrepid young, so unlike the young as they used to be, went off to face the unknown terrors of the *douane*, leaving two older women, sitting in the obscurity of the carriage, holding tight to their despatch-cases and hand-bags. The two young things slipped off into the night and one could only commend them to God. I was prepared to do battle for my hand-bag as I had done it at Modane against French and Italian soldiers and *douaniers*, who refused even to look at my Embassy pass, which, by the way, was stolen from me at that accursed station.

We heard the doors closing gently along the train. Footsteps came nearer. It was our turn. Our door opened and a tall man came in. "*Bitte!*" he began. "*Bitte,*" prefaces every remark in Germany. The word is very soft on the German tongue.

We took it for granted that he was asking us if we had anything to declare. We had not and he went off again with another murmured "*Bitte.*"

Before we could be frightened about them our doves flew back to the ark. The examination of the luggage had been a pleasing performance. The *douaniers* were collectively "lambs." One had shown infinite patience when a key could not be found; and the tall, fair young porter who had returned our

luggage to the van had disappeared before they could tip him. That was a cause of regret to the young ladies for quite a considerable portion of the continuing journey.

We arrived at Cologne in heavy rain, just as Pat had come in in 1918 when he, in the famous Division, marched over the Hohenzollern Bridge, past Plumer and by the great Cathedral, swathed in mist. "The people are extraordinarily friendly," he had written, "and cannot do enough for us." We were to experience that friendliness which is the bewilderment of every English-speaking new-comer, but we were not prepared for it yet.

When the Army of Occupation marched in in 1918 its members were strictly forbidden to eat food prepared by the Germans lest it be poisoned. I imagine that some of them risked it, since one of my young soldier's letters commented on the fact that when he arrived at his billet, with his revolver handy, accompanied by an orderly carrying a rifle, the Frau met him with hot coffee. Perhaps it was a propitiatory offering, poor thing! She must have been as agreeably surprised to find the enemy represented by Pat as we were at the enemy Rhinelanders.

The flat where I am writing runs round a deep well at the bottom of which is a courtyard. My Frau tells me that when the Allied Forces came in some of the British soldiers were in the courtyard below. She had lived eighteen years in Birmingham, so was less frightened of the soldiers than her neigh-

bours. Knowing, as she said, that the English always love their tea, she appeared among the soldiers with a kettle of boiling water and whatever else she could furnish for the tea. "No, Missus," they said, shaking their heads, while they looked in longing at the proposed tea. She understood. Pouring some of the water into a cup she drank it, whereupon the soldiers made their tea joyfully.

Rooms had been taken for us in a German hotel, by a British officer. The day of our arrival, when he came to see how we fared, while we talked to him in the little space at the foot of the stairs, furnished with a table and two chairs—German hotels do not run to a lounge—we took the salutations, the "*Guten Tag*" of people as they passed up and down the staircase, as a civility to his uniform; but not a bit of it. Many a time the Germans must have taken us for boors before we realised that their courtesies were intended for us. The Germans salute in the street anyone who is staying in the same hotel with them. If they sit at a table with you in a restaurant they bow as they leave, or as you leave. Their "*Bitte*" as they took a seat near us: their "*Guten Tag*" as they passed us on the stairs were, for long enough, wasted on us. We were hardly aware at first when our host bowed almost to the ground when we met, and his very shy wife bowed as she passed us; for, of course, we thought they all regarded us as enemies.

The first time we waited in a party at a street corner for the tram after nightfall, I was prepared

for any kind of hostility from the German crowd of honest citizens. We eyed our fellow-guests in the restaurant of the hotel with alarm. While I worked in my bedroom I locked the door against possible danger. It seemed absolutely incredible that we could be there, surrounded by Germans; and we were slow to believe that we were not a penny the worse.

To be sure, the French came to the restaurant. It was before the Ruhr Occupation, but even then the French were not as the English. It was the oddest sight to see the French officers, accompanied by Madame and the children of many ages, clank in, take up a long table in the midst of their foes and be waited on by men who had been up against them in the War. The French had always the air of the Conqueror. There was no trifling with them; their tips were infinitesimal, which was to be expected, seeing how badly the French officers are paid. One observed how easy it was for them to sit down in the restaurant, officers and men together, side by side; the British Tommy cheek by jowl with them. They are the only true, the only natural democrats.

There were two of the waiters who *looked* everything that propaganda had told us of the German. One had a shaven head and a pallid grey face. The other was beetling-browed, black-avised and hook-nosed. One could always see these two "coming over" through the smoke of the barrage.

There was an evening when some question of mine

about the condition of the children moved the black-avised man to tears. I had gone into the little office to ask him something and we had, that being settled, talked of other things. At that question about the children he looked up at me suddenly.

"I haf one little boy," he said, "he is six. His mütter is dead. I haf a miserable forty marks a day." (The mark at that time was 1200 to the pound.) "He has to schleep on the floor: I haf no bed for him. No matter in summer, but the winter comes."

To my consternation he put his head down on his folded arms and wept.

He was gone the next day, before we could help to purchase a bed for the child. I saw him no more.

The other waiters might have happened anywhere—not perhaps the one who wore a wedding-ring and had the manners of a very gentle gentleman. We used to make romances about him—how that he was an Austrian cavalry officer reduced to this humble calling: how that a rich and lovely American should come to the "Kaiser Wilhelm" and say one day, "Say, friend, this isn't your job," and take him off and marry him into splendour. As though a rich American was ever likely to come to the "Kaiser Wilhelm"!

There was another waiter who was as like as two peas to an Irish general man of ours. He had a delightful sense of humour, even if he didn't understand a word of what we said. I may mention that we were four months in Germany and taking German

lessons assiduously before we made a discovery. We had been very much pleased at our first coming with a soup which we took to be sago. We ordered it on many occasions and even pressed it on our visitors, quite undeterred by the curious fact that it was always a different soup. At last the thing burst on us. It was *Tages Suppe*—the soup of the day. No wonder that waiter was amused.

There was another waiter whom we called the Russian Steam-roller, from the formation of his face ; and another, George Maguire, because he was so like a friend of ours in Ireland. These things, trivial in themselves, connote that we were really happy in our surroundings. One nicknames those whom one likes, as every schoolboy knows.

The head-waiter, who spoke English very well and had the twinkling way with his legs of the born waiter, for whom, indeed, waiting seems an anomalous description, had alarmed us at first by the cross of sticking-plaster on the back of his head. It looked as though it might be permanent, and gave us qualms as to its possible origin ; but it disappeared in time, and we never learnt its origin. He ran the whole place, to all appearances, with splendid efficiency till a day came when a reckless Cockney family gave him a tip of a pound sterling. It was as though you gave an English waiter ten pounds. He gambled with that pound for a time, selling it and buying it back again, turning it into marks and back into English money. Finally, he disappeared and we

heard he had gone to Essen, where all the waiters seemed to go in those days. The things that were to happen at Essen were yet on the knees of the gods.

There was also Heinrich whom we called James. James was a fair-haired, pink-cheeked understudy to the efficient head-waiter and a most inefficient understudy, but he was always smiling. To judge by the many smiles we evoked we must have been very amusing. James was a participant in an incident which gave me a bad moment in the early days at the "Kaiser Wilhelm," while we still believed that we were surrounded by enemies. I was writing in my bedroom when the door suddenly opened and the gentleman who cleaned our boots, a barbarous person who looked like a young brigand, put in a wild head. I could see James grinning from ear to ear in the background. "*Munisch! Munisch!*" growled the brigand, which was his way of asking for largess. I pushed him out with both hands and locked the door behind him. After that I worked always behind a locked door, but there was really no occasion for alarm. James and the young brigand whom he was corrupting, I am sure, disappeared simultaneously a few days later.

We were nearly three months at the "William" as we came to call it familiarly, and that nicknaming again was the measure of our liking. Everyone was anxious to please us and we got a deal of amusement out of simple happenings. For example, when the

mark began its race to destruction and its pace grew faster, every Monday morning the card in our room which bore the tariff for the night was altered. With the mark at 1200 to the pound sterling it had been 120, i.e. two shillings a night for a single room. Enter to me writing then, on every Monday morning, James, with a beaming face, armed with a sponge with which he proceeded to wash out the figures on the card. While he did it he was a picture of Laughter holding both his sides. I preserved what dignity I could in the circumstances and pretended to be absorbed in what I was doing, while James, with a glance at me and a final suffocating chuckle, retired, to repeat the process all along the corridor.

Presently there would be another knock at the door and enter the head-waiter, who, with a subdued hilariousness proper to his age and dignity, proceeded to fill in the new figures. I never examined them in his presence, but I am sure he had a vision of me standing tip-toe to look at them as soon as he was out of the room.

The hotel people were always on the look-out for something to interest and please us. There was the tiny toy-dog belonging to the proprietor's daughter. Some one of the family was carrying him about all day long and always teasing him, so the little dog, who had learnt to play up to that teasing, made a ferocious demonstration if you tried to make friends with him. Our interest in him was taken as a personal compliment, not only by the family, but by the

whole staff. A waiter would come across the room from a distant table, leaving his table unserved, to tell us the dog's name was Prince, as they would gather in a circle to watch our efforts at making friends with him.

There was also the *Englische Katze*, a tabby which had been left behind by the English soldiers after they had occupied the hotel in the early days of the Occupation. The *Englische Katze* was introduced to us with an amiable confidence in our interest. There was a kitten that had a German papa; that, too, was explained to us with an inference that we could not be so much interested in the kitten of mixed parentage as in her English mother.

The door leading from the hall to the private apartments of the family had two half-circles cut out at the foot, one for the cat and one for the kitten. Prince was always carried to and fro, else there might have been a third opening for him.

I have seen the *Englische Katze* walking unconcernedly about the restaurant where all the customers brought their dogs on strings—big dogs and little dogs, Schäfferhunds, which we call Alsatian wolf-dogs, that look only a little removed from the wolf but seem very gentle creatures unless they are made savage, the Dachshund, an alluring dog, and minute toy-terriers. I have never seen such small dogs anywhere as in Germany, and the spectacle of a large German with one of these toy-dogs or a puppy at the end of a string was very amusing to unaccustomed eyes.

We had heard a great deal at the "Kaiser Wilhelm" of an English officer on the retired list, who had stayed like us for three months. To stay three months at the "Kaiser Wilhelm," which was usually only a port of call, was, we discovered, to pay an exquisite personal compliment to the staff as well as the proprietors.

One day when we came down to lunch the head-waiter introduced us with a flourish to Colonel B——. So pleased was he about it that benevolent joy exuded from him; Colonel B—— and we might have spent our previous lives in looking for each other, so pleased was he at bringing us together. We said a few polite words to Colonel B—— and passed on; but almost immediately the head-waiter was at our elbows. Might Colonel B—— occupy the extra chair at our table? It would be so nice for us all to lunch together. At the thought of the niceness the head-waiter's eyes watered and he rubbed his hands softly together.

We lunched in company and the head-waiter, whose duties were purely ornamental at that hour, watched us from the doorway with such satisfaction beaming from his face that we felt we must be happy being the occasion of so much happiness.

We had got over our first feeling of being in an enemy country before we left the "Kaiser Wilhelm." That excellent hostelry had only one disadvantage: the chambermaids took their breakfast in the bathroom and breakfasted at the very hour of baths. We

suspected that someone slept there when the house was crowded. However, the maids were very amiable about the occupation of their breakfast-room, and waited breakfast if you had slipped into the bathroom just in time; fortunately we had little outside competition for the bathroom as a bathroom. When we revisit the "William" now for a meal we are received as much as possible by the landlord in the manner in which the old English landlords were apt to usher to their rooms persons of importance, i.e. walking backwards, with a lit candle in a silver candlestick in either hand.

Now that we are no longer at the hotel we are still looked upon as friendly and influential persons who might be counted on for a hand extended in protection if need be. The other day when there was a little difficulty about a British N.C.O. who had been charged the wine-tax and our proprietor was called before the Summary Court, there came a new English-speaking head-waiter to implore us to give Mr. Schneider a certificate of character. We did. It was not read at the Summary Court, but a few days later we called at the "William" and asked the head-waiter how Mr. Schneider had fared.

"It was not bad for Mr. Schneider," he said, "but it was not good for Mr. Schneider. It was six hundred mark."

CHAPTER II

WE ARE AT HOME

IN the large room on the third floor of the "Kaiser Wilhelm," one wide window of which overlooked the Ring while the other looked on the boulevard of a side street—all streets in Cologne are boulevards if they are only wide enough—we heard all day and all night in the sultry weather the plashing and tinkling of a fountain, a most heavenly sound in the heat. Those were the days when one flung the "balloon" off one's bed into the farthest corner of the room and pulled a sofa in front of it, so that one might forget it.

For three months or longer we had anticipated intense heat in Cologne. A colonel I met at dinner at my first coming had assured me that he had known Cologne in August to be as bad as the East. As a matter of fact there was never anything that Summer like the heat of a London Summer; nor was there even in the heat-wave of 1923. Despite its situation in the river valley or the river-plain, Cologne is very dry. Even when it rained in Winter and windows were wide open there was no damp, nothing like the damp garments and mouldy shoes

of English or Irish wet weather. One left one's keys about and they never rusted.

But what heavenly things the fountains of Cologne would be in a hot Summer! The fountain, which laughed and plashed into my sleep, and through the sunny afternoons when the window looking down on to the Ring had to be blinded for the South sun, fell from the mouths and nostrils of four dragons into a wide basin of stone. I say "fell," but the water was flung upward before it fell, and the air was full of its wet sweetness. An equestrian figure of Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse surmounted it. Everywhere in Cologne there are Hohenzollern horsemen. There are beautiful fountains everywhere; but when all is said and done I choose the fountain in the Deutscher Ring, and its sister fountain on the Barbarossa Platz before the beautiful fountains made by the hand of man. In pre-War days I am told that the fountain in the Barbarossa Platz played eau-de-Cologne. It may have been more fragrant, but hardly so beautiful as in these sparser days. These fountains are just tall jets of water flung high in air and falling into a stone basin. You can see them far off in the hot days, slender pillars of water, like veiled figures of brides, the Lorelei, or some lovely water-sprite.

The Rings in Cologne run round the city, enclosing it beyond where the old walls and the old city gates were once. There are bits of the old walls remaining in many places. Of the gates there remain the

Hahnentor on Rudolfsplatz by the Opera House, the Eigelstein Torburg, behind the Deutscher Ring, and the Severin Torburg. Within the Rings are enclosed all that is beautiful of the old town. Beyond them stretch the new quarters, some of them very fine palatial quarters—but a deal unspeakably dreary and depressing, as the outlying portions of a big manufacturing town are usually. There is much of Cologne which might be Manchester; and far beyond the crowded and toppling flats, one is seldom out of sight of a factory chimney or many chimneys. These things are the price a people pay for trade and commerce. The flat system is the housing system of Cologne and the toppling houses shut out the sky.

But in old and new Cologne alike there was a brave striving to keep a thought of the country green for the town. I take off my hat to the town-planners of Cologne. When Cork was a gay and mercurial city, much given to laughter and nicknaming, one of her citizens came, to Cologne it might be, or perhaps it was Paris, and going home preached the gospel of the boulevards, wherefore he was known as Billy Boulevard to his dying day. I would risk that if I could only make town-dwellers everywhere hear the gospel of the Boulevard. The Rings, with their wide spaces, make a girdle of green beauty all around the town. At that first dinner-party which took place at a house in the Deutscher Ring from which my kind hosts fled all too soon, as is the way with soldiers, I heard talk at the dinner-table of nightin-

gales singing in the Ring. They were still singing in mid-June.

The Deutscher Ring is just an unusually wide street, one end of which, where the trams lace and interlace, calling itself the Platz der Republik. At the other end is the Rhine. They are all good houses in the Deutscher Ring and the Platz der Republik—what the house-agent would call a first-class residential quarter—but some of the houses as one goes down towards the Rhine are palatial. Indeed, I have seldom seen as many fine houses as in Cologne, especially along the Rhine *Ufer*, between the Hohenzollern Bridge and the Bridge of Boats by which one crosses to Mülheim. You are constantly reminded that Cologne was a town of a Prince-Bishop and many merchant-princes, but never an aristocracy. The splendours, old and new, meet you on every side with a reminder of great riches and munificent spending.

Between the houses of the Deutscher Ring, in the middle of the open space, there lies a charming small park. Someone told me the other day that it was made on the model of some famous pleasure-ground; the information was not more definite than that. The trams go to and fro between neat little islands in a mosaic pattern. You turn your back on them and the beauty of the quiet country-garden and pleasaunce begins to unfold itself. These garden-planners make a succession, a variety of beauties. You meet first the fountain springing high from its basin of gold and silver fish, amid a

mosaic of beautiful flower-beds. The flowers grow in the greatest profusion: there were hedges and enclosures of late roses and asters and chrysanthemums in the Autumn days, when I first came to know the Deutscher Ring; the herbaceous border gives all the blooms of the year in an ordered progress. I have seen it through the seasons, never more beautiful than with the tulip trees and magnolias in great blobs of white and pink in the Spring. All round this delightful garden are seats where the weary may rest and feast their eyes on the flowers and in the hot days see and taste the coolness of the fountain. Another stretch of the garden simulates a stretch of river and green river banks with overhanging trees. Gazing at the little coppice of forest trees, with an occasional slim poplar or conifer, you can imagine yourself in a lovely reach of the Upper Thames, since by the trees and grassy spaces flows a river which it is difficult to believe is artificial. There are winding walks and little bridges and bosky dells and all manner of beauty. After that come the two long walks—pleachèd garden alleys, the old English might have called them—where you can walk or rest under trees, amid flowering shrubs; and there are lovely spaces of green velvety grass under all the trees. The order is exquisite. There is perpetual sweeping and mowing and watering and cleaning-up of these gardens and, in the result, there is the Deutscher Ring; Cologne has many places like the Deutscher Ring.

The Rings are a succession of gardens and fountains and Hohenzollern statues. Where there is no chance of a garden, as in front of the Opera House, there are flower-beds in the street islands, beautifully planned and kept flower-beds between the tram lines; there are the slim chestnuts, and, as you go on by the boulevard by Salier Ring and Sachsen Ring, these change to tall forest trees by which flows running water. The green, beautifully kept grass-plots with their brilliant flower-beds are at the foot of the Dom. In Spring it was a sight to see the magnolias in flower against the fretted and pierced walls of the Dom, the magnolias and the dropping yellow of acacia and other blossoms of the flowering time.

What would be waste spaces elsewhere are in the German town turned to beautiful and profitable uses. The railway lines, which at home have horrid dumps to either side of them, are here turned to green account. There is an extraordinary demand for flowers in Germany and the nursery-gardens and the market-gardens and the plots go side by side with the railway lines. You may see, if you have not the good fortune to be purblind, or if like Nelson you prefer to use the blind eye, the omnipresent factory chimneys; but you may walk in beauty and have beauty as far as any reasonable eye will wish to see, and if you must look beyond, why, the church-towers of Cologne dominate all the chimneys. You can hardly ever escape from the twin-towers of the

Dom ; they too are omnipresent, meeting you unexpectedly wherever a street opens.

Before the market-gardens and nursery-gardens and the plots begin the space by the railway line is turned to other beneficent purposes. There are many playgrounds, where the multitudinous children of the congested flats and the poor streets can do what they will, within reason. They never seem to want to do anything out of reason. They are strangely disciplined seeing how much is made of them. The walls of the Playground in the Deutscher Ring are thickly covered with flowers, but the Playground itself is sanded and is always dry, and there are the swings and such things as children love. Across the road I can see from my window another Playground. Over it the lights and signals of the Outer Cologne Station make a White City of the night. On hot nights of the Summer one hears the babble of children in the Playground till long after dark. At five in the morning they are out there with the birds. As I write, in May, a lilac and a privet hedge in full bloom holds the children safely from the street traffic.

If I did not believe German children to be disciplined from the cradle I should believe them to be unnatural. Perhaps if one is taught from the cradle that one must not break one's toys one would grow up not to want to break them. There is certainly nothing unnatural about the German children at play : they are as wildly gay as our children at

home—only, they always show the results of discipline. The noise they make is not even discordant.

“A wild disorder,” the disorder which Nature makes, is a beautiful thing: disorder created by human beings is ugly and depressing. The silken and verdant order of these open spaces in this beautiful old town is a delight to the eye and heart, and it is everywhere, as the gardens are everywhere. Perhaps Cologne, with all its toppling houses of flats, would be impossible without the gardens. I have forgotten here the age of the moon: she gets no chance to look in at your window; you may glimpse her far away among the chimneys, but to see her sailing serene on a purple sky, attended by her stars, is not possible in Cologne. I have not seen the moon half a dozen times during my many months in Cologne; nor known she was there. Nor have I seen the sunset except in bits. Opposite my window the blessed open space stretches away to the Eifel. We breathe the country air, thanks to the railway line, and that makes up for the shunting which begins at 4 a.m. after three hours of rest.

There is a delightful little Stadt-garten a bit farther on by the railway line, just forest trees and grassy spaces and flowers and an abundance of seats.

In another open space, close by, there is a simulated steep ascent: it is a mound set against a wall and discreetly planted. You could believe anything when the German sets out to do landscape-gardening.

The great open spaces of Cologne are, indeed,

enviable. There is the Stadtwald at Lindenthal which has all the beauties you might find in one of the private parks of the great houses in England. The Stadtwald must be nearly a mile square and it has two lakes. You may find the deer there, sophisticated creatures, who nose you, at first hopefully, then contemptuously, if you have not brought them dainties. There are tennis courts and a football- and cricket-ground; but you may be unaware of these if you wish, since there is plenty of room for solitude. In the Gürtel, i.e. girdle, surrounding the wood, are many charming houses. The German house-builder has quite a pretty taste in his designs; balconies, cream-coloured walls, green outside shutters, steeply pointed roofs and flowery gardens make the houses no offence to the green wood.

There is a Volksgarten at the back of the Sachsen Ring with a lake which none would suspect of being artificial, an ordered garden with a dial at the centre, and many roses overlooking the lake, a sunk-garden, a water-garden, all so beautiful and so perfectly planned that it might be the exquisite toy of some rich man. There are buildings, castellated and buttressed, with a long wall which might have been the rich man's dwelling; but I have found no history attached to the Volksgarten. The Germans of the fairy-stories have by nature the art to make-believe.

Such gardens are great mercies. They are in the very thickly populated parts of the town, with the hideous new streets and toppling houses close at hand.

The Volksgarten when I was there was full of children. German children do not annoy the adults, unless it be by their number, for they are, indeed, multitudinous. They disarm you even if you are of the irritable sort by their eagerness to pick up something you have dropped or to guide you or help you in some way. There is the inevitable Children's Playground, a quite big one, under the trees, with rails to either side. On the rails fencing the Playground was a notice that the Playground was reserved for British children, signed by the English military authorities. By the rails was a long line of German children looking on wistfully at the games of the others. It made one feel rather sad, that segregation.

Much of this chapter was written in Autumn. I was yet but a stranger to Cologne, only beginning to know and love her. It was yet for me to know the Deutscher Ring in Spring, all wild bloom and magnolia and pink and white May and chestnut blossom; with wallflowers and forget-me-nots, all set in the delicate wild green of Spring.

I asked my friend, Mr. Apfel, of whom more anon, who was the incomparable gardener that designed such miracles of beauty in a little space as the Deutscher Ring and the Stadtgarten and the Volksgarten and the Stadtwald and the Botanischer Garten. He said: "There is a Committee, a Board of expert gardeners."

One never saw more beautiful turf. The fortunate traveller who happens to stay at the Dom Hotel,

looking out on the charming prospect of the Dom Platz, under the mighty Cathedral, will remember the beauty of that particular bit of Cologne, with its ancient fountain, its fragrant and ordered flower-borders, its wonderful grass. No Irish pasture, no College garden in England, can excel the shining green of that grass. To be sure, it is constantly being sprayed with water that makes a silver mist in the air, to which the children come near in the hot weather for the pleasure of getting showered upon. Not a sign of neglect is upon it any day of the year.

Since these first chapters were written I have learnt a deal about Cologne and I have seen Cologne at her moment, when even in the streets one may walk under fairy arches of the green. There are seats in the Deutscher Ring quite enclosed in greenery, great half-moons of seats, occupied these days mainly by weary people and the old, full of a restful light as the deep sea's floor might be in sunlight.

One loves all these gardens ; but the most beautiful to my mind is the Botanischer Garten, with the Flora, that exquisite place of trees and temples and pergolas and fountains and water running through little aqueducts and widening under bridges ; on a hot May day there is the thickest shade and the wildest singing and chuckling and gurgling of birds that you may ever hear. Of course, the Flora is a Roman garden. Sitting, looking across a sheet of daisied grass, for German gardeners are more sensitive than ours and they will not destroy the loveliest thing

of the year, one remembers that Cologne was a Roman town and colony, Colonia.

“ O Felix Agrippina !
Nobilis Romanorum Colonia ! ”

cried the old painter, Anton Wornsam of Worms, who painted a view of the city in 1531.

The stateliness of the old Roman villa garden is the Flora's and the luxuriance. It is a garden for patricians ; but here the people come as they will, out from the teeming streets and stark houses, in numbers that take your breath away. You are always bewildered in Germany by the enormous multitude of people ; but in the Catholic Rhineland, where they do not limit the families, in Cologne especially, the most Catholic of all Catholic towns, the children overflow.

I once asked my Frau the number of the average family approximately in the Rhineland. She answered : “ I do not know, but where we lived at Mülheim there were fifteen children in the family next door to us. The lady has said to her husband, ‘ Karl, there is a child missing. I do not know which it is, but I have counted them several times and there is always one short.’ ”

Looking at those children could one wish one of them away ? They are beautiful children—as beautiful as those St. Augustine saw in the market-place, and always beautifully clean and well-kept, so that your hand passes with delight over the pale floss-silk heads, as you go up and down the poor streets where

the verminous and unwashed children of our towns are unknown.

Despite all the open spaces, the pleasure resorts, the near country, you will go nowhere in or about Cologne on a fine Sunday without finding an incredible congestion. In the depths of Königsforst perhaps, in the country of the Seven Hills beyond the Drachenfels, and in the Eifel, there is such solitude that as you walk in a deep valley the sound of your own footsteps, flung back by Echo from the rocky heights, daunts you by its loneliness. To such places flies Solitude and you must follow and discover her.

If one must have a crowd then give me this strangely disciplined and inoffensive German crowd. Dogs are not permitted in the Botanischer Garten, which must be a grief to the little girls who carry puppies in their arms through the week, and the boys who lead them on strings, and the Papas with their Schäfferhunds and the Mammias with the wise, gentle little Dachshunds, or the tiny black-and-tans, or the Maltese "silk" dogs.

But when you have let multitudes of German boys and girls loose in the Botanischer Garten and the Flora, there will not be a leaf astray at close of day. These children look and never touch. Yet they are not automata. In the narrow streets I know best, between the Ring and the Army Post Office, the children scoot and motor-skate and bicycle in the teeth of the traffic, bringing your heart into your mouth. They are as fearless as sparrows.

In their own streets they seem to do what they will. The road is their playground. I envy the nerve of a man who drives a taxi in those streets. Just by the Ursulnkirche is a twist of road which has a wood pavement. When there was frost and snow that was the children's skating-rink. None interfered when they made a glacier of the roadway. I think if anyone had objected they would have desisted, but no one objected. My friend, Mr. Apfel, who will be often in these pages, says that such freedom would not have been allowed before the War, that in the War police authority was relaxed as far as the children were concerned and has never tightened again.

The children take their lives in their hands. I am told that the German pedestrian who walks in the roadway has no rights as against the traffic. I have not seen a child killed nor a dog, I am glad to say, in the ill-directed traffic of Cologne; but the Moloch must take its toll all the same.

The discipline of the children and the adults in such places as the Botanischer Garten is admirable. It deserves to win the entry to this Paradise. Beyond the Flora comes the Botanischer Garten proper. It covers a considerable space of ground, and it contains all possible delights in the way of a garden. Before I came there, in a wonderful early May, I had not known what it is to breathe lilac. If the pure, crystalline, tasteless and odourless air were suddenly to become lilac air, it might

pall. But for once to breathe and taste lilac is pure delight; lilac subtly mingled with wallflower and the May and all the narcissus family and syringa and lily-of-the-valley, pinks and a thousand other scents, shot through somehow with the laugh of ecstatic bird-song and the falling of fountain water, coloured with the greens of leaf and grass, with the warm sun and the blue and silver sky. It was an hour to be remembered.

The lilac hedges were thick on every side. Lilac was King. But, what a mind and heart must have planned the Botanischer Garten! Since God made the first garden Man in His image follows Him as He made. You had no time to grow wearied of any one delight in the Botanischer Garten, for there was incessant variety—now ribbons of forget-me-nots trailing through the daisied grass, under a far-flung fountain-spray; now masses of honey-coloured and pink rhododendrons: wallflowers in tight packed masses of all the tawny and murrey-coloured velvets. Pansies and pinks. Low fruit trees in blossom in a green orchard glade. Again, you may hear the whirring of a water-hen, clear, as I used to hear it from a little West of Ireland lake, fed full with mountain streams; and there was the quacking of ducks from the water-garden, full of cool plashing and bubbling of running water, beautiful in the hot day, with its cool delicious smell.

Close by was the rock-garden, within hearing of

the water-garden, and the colour of it was gold and apricot. There were a thousand delights: and nothing is dry and scientific, though you will find little parties going round, being instructed about the plants, all with the spectacled, eager absorption of the Germans where knowledge is concerned, none with the boredom or absent-mindedness you would have found in our islanders. Sometimes it was just the Herr Papa instructing the family. Sometimes a little class was being held. There was something gentle and earnest about these people, something of the genuine spirit of studentship, of love of knowledge.

The official is quite out of evidence in these German gardens, although he is there. Whether the children ever long to carry home the fading bloom in little hot hands, pressed to a small breast, as children do at home, I cannot say. Even when the children are taken far into the country in Germany they come home empty-handed.

There is a story of a visitor who came to Berlin after some dangerous riots had taken place and was taken round to see the traces. "Here things were at their worst," said his guide, in a beautiful public garden. "Here?" echoed the visitor, looking in bewilderment at the velvety grass. "But there is no sign of riot. This is quite untrampled." "To be sure," said the other—"don't you see the notices—'Please do not walk on the grass'?"

The Zoologischer Garten is in the same sheltered

green corner of Cologne, behind the Rhine Ufer, which is a perfect Paradise of birds. I am told that it has too its sylvan beauties, but as I do not care for animals in captivity I have not seen them. They say the animals cry there as though they were hungry. There is a good deal of hunger in Germany these days.

At Merheim where now the Races take place, my Frau tells me that the flocks and herds to provision the Army were gathered in 1914, coming in in vast numbers from all the surrounding country.

I am only aware as yet of one cemetery, but that is a garden—not a place of cypresses and yews, but a place of flowers and spreading trees, with seats where the living may rest near the dead, whose graves are nearly as humble as the grass, without realising that they are in a cemetery. There is none of the *Pompa Mortis* one remembers with a shudder in an Italian Campo Santo where the rich dead—or the dead who have been rich—lie in palaces. Anything more depressing and terrifying than a palatial tomb I cannot well imagine—such a great shell for the little husk of mortality. Italian graveyards, at least the great town graveyards of which Genoa and Florence are so proud, are just enormous stone-masons' yards. There are neither cenotaphs, nor urns, nor meaningless stones in a Rhineland graveyard, nor the railed-off spaces where the man of money and position lays his mortality away from his poorer fellows, as one sees it in England.

At Nippes every grave showed the Crucifix, the leaning Figure, the wide Arms of Love spread over the dead. Hardly any of these monuments was more than as tall as a young child. You could forget them if you would. When on the night between All Saints and All Souls the myriad little candles were lit upon the graves it was as though the flowers of the grass, daisies and buttercups, and all such little things dear to children, had changed to living light.

I suppose it is the old religious tradition. The graves belonged to the Germany that made the Christmas Trees for the children, and Santa Claus and the Fairy Tales and Shock-Headed Peter; the Germany of the music and the poetry and the romantic simplicity, before Queen Victoria had stood for "a strong Prussia," and Protestant Germany had become the land of philosophic doubt. Death in the Rhineland graveyards is noble in its humility, the beautiful humility which in the Middle Ages of Faith laid a king upon ashes when the time came for him to pass before the King of Kings.

CHAPTER III

THE CHURCHES

THERE are seventy-three churches in Cologne, thirty-six within the Rings. Of course, the Cathedral dominates the town. For many miles you cannot get away from her. Coming to Cologne by train you see her long, long before you are near your journey's end; and she is the landmark which brings you home when you have strayed. If you have wandered in the wide fields beyond Cologne and the night is coming on and you have no compass you need not be afraid—the beckoning twin-towers lead you home.

I do not intend to make this chapter an inventory or history of the churches. That, any guide-book will do more competently. I will just talk about the seventy-three, or as many of them as I yet know, as they affected or impressed me. At my first coming to Cologne I haunted the Cathedral. On those Summer afternoons and evenings it was a blaze of colour, a very jewel-house of God, with all the windows blazing. In a special sense I loved it because, being rather more than purblind, I was free of the sickening fear of tumbling down unforeseen steps.

In all the long stretch of the Cathedral there is not a single step and the uncertain foot may go on briskly. But I am quite well aware that the interior of the Cathedral is a disappointment, from the point of view of beauty and impressiveness. It does not even impress you with a sense of size. It is much larger than it looks from within. It is unimaginative, that interior, perhaps because it was built bit by bit, taking some four hundred years to finish, and coming well within the paralysing influence of the 19th Century, so far as the imaginative mind and hand were concerned. Outside it is splendid, though an artist will pick you holes in it; but you always feel when you gaze at the Dom standing against the blue and white sky which one so often gets in Cologne, that there is something maternal about it. It is the great Cathedral of Mary Mother. All of Cologne that matters, the Cologne within the Rings, crowds to the Dom, as the chickens under the wings of their mother. She to whom it is dedicated, has given to it something brooding and benign.

Later on, after a good deal of absence from it, bending my knee in other churches, I came to love the Cathedral newly. I had said that the interior was like a glorified railway station, but I unsay that. It has a great calm and dignity and except for some bad modern glass, it is only adorned worthily. On too many of the old churches of Cologne is there superimposed mean and tawdry decorations, niggling lines of gilt on the grey walls of the Minoriten-

kirche, painted daisies on a door of the Apostlnkirche, and so on. Even my Ursulnkirche was so defaced, but luckily I could not see it.

I like the religion of Catholic Germany—I mean the manifestation of it—incredibly better than I like the same thing in Catholic Italy or Catholic Spain or France. I suppose we islanders are more akin to the Germans, sober and restrained. Someone visiting Cologne said to me one day—"The Dom now—it's a show-place, but it never ceases to be a church." That is quite true, but it is the people who make the church. If the Dom lacks anything of what you get from the Ursulnkirche or the Gereonkirche or the Apostlnkirche or Sankt Maria in Kapitol, it must be because it took too long in the building to be saturated as these older churches are with the prayers of centuries; or perhaps because the minds and hearts of the people had time to change. It lacks consistency, continuity. But it is a church and a noble one, with its wonderful springing arches. You have to bring a very devout mind to Cologne to get at her secret; and a Catholic mind. I do not use the word in a restricted sense. With that precious possession one could never be lonely in Cologne: to come to it is a rich spiritual experience. I, who remained untouched by the Italian churches, as *churches*, even by the Duomo and its wandering crowds, can never be grateful enough for what the churches of Cologne gave me. I wonder if Atheism could stand against them?

There are always crowds in the Dom, as there were in the Duomo, but with a difference. The staring, foolish and irreverent crowds that fill the great Italian churches, changing and passing all day long, are not in the Dom. There are bareheaded, reverent crowds, wandering along silently, looking at the marvels. Perhaps the reverence of those to whom the Dom belongs—there are always praying people—impresses visitors from outside. Perhaps the scarlet beadle, as fine as a Lord Mayor of London, would very quickly suppress irreverence. There must be no movement of sightseers during any service. Perhaps it is the spirit of the Three Kings, whose shrine is there—Kaspar, Baltazar and Melchior, kneeling in adoration before the Child—that broods over the Dom and old Cologne which specially belongs to them. Anyhow the sightseers wear an air as devoutly reverent as the worshippers.

But the people who come there, if they have the fear of the Lord, which is a holy thing and the beginning of wisdom, are not afraid of Him. They are in their Father's House. All Summer one sees the groups of children, of young men and maidens—who take their holidays, knapsacks on back, staff in hand, tramping through the country or to the sea—eating their food in the Cathedral and resting there, no one rebuking them. Even old tramping men I have seen sitting on the altar steps while they ate and not a beadle rebukes or restrains them.

Through the Autumn and Winter months as well

as the Spring and Summer, what remains of the Wander-Vögel, that society of the young, who walk in the country on Sundays, going perhaps thirty miles by train and walking back again, have their Masses in the Cologne churches, beginning at 4 o'clock in the morning. Many a wet Sunday morning I have heard the swift feet of the young go by in the darkness below my windows, on their way to the early Mass, before the country expedition. So does the old Church strive at least to guard her children, arming them against Pan and his crew or any soulless spirits to be met with in wood or on mountain. I have heard them return in the dark of midnight or early morning, filling the night with song and music. Sometimes in the Summer one used to meet young men and girls, dressed as though at the Opera, in picturesque folk-dresses, twanging their banjos and singing in the streets, happy and healthy and burnt brown by the sun, cleansed and washed by the winds and the rains. Sometimes they came through the crowds in the Hohestrasse, the fashionable street of Cologne, bringing romance and the country green into the pushing and striving crowds of all nationalities. It is something we islanders are incapable of—those romantic touches that suddenly illumine with gold and scarlet the streets of a foreign town. We should call it theatrical, but the youths and maidens were as unconscious as the birds in the woods and fields they came from. The Army of Occupation does indeed call

the Wander-Vögel "the boombler"—I do not know if it is spelt so—but the Army of Occupation would have little use for the picturesque beyond the confines of their trade, which is nothing if not picturesque.

The Wander-Vögel is the greatest of the open-air companionships of Germany. The school-children still go out in charge of their teachers in the long Summer days. They go a day's march between club-house and club-house. If they come to a town such as Cologne they wait a while to inspect its beauties. Germany is studded with the club-houses of these various associations. Word is sent from one club-house to another to bespeak accommodation for the party. During the holiday season they overflow into the villages. When they have left a club-house their destination is noted, so that if they should not reach their next the alarm is at once given.

These associations are not merely for the populace. The children of the New Poor who were once professional and are now absorbed into the workers, go on pilgrimage, boys and girls. They take enough food for the day and a few necessary things. They tramp for perhaps a month, counting on procuring their supplies by the way, and return home very happy and healthy after the gipsy life. They sleep in barns whenever better accommodation fails them. The daughters of a Frankfurt professor, with some girl-friends and fellow-students, tramped in this

way last Summer from Frankfurt to the North Sea and back again, several hundreds of miles.

Apart from the Wander-Vögel, which, before the War, had caught all young Germany into its membership, there is a great deal of this banding together of the young for the purpose of seeing and admiring the beautiful things of Nature and Art. My friend, Mr. Apfel, says that the Wander-Vögel was part of the great movement of Youth before the War. He added : " There are no young in Germany now : they are all in the factories." The Wander-Vögel has nothing like its original membership.

But despite Mr. Apfel, great crowds go out from Cologne and return to it every Sunday. Slung round their necks they carry the twisted bread which is their insignia. You can make no country excursion round about Cologne of Sundays in which you are not accompanied by troops of the Wander-Vögel, burnt golden brown, proof against wind and weather. It has, alas, fallen into some disrepute. Pan is in the woods, and some have found the Venusberg among the mountains. But still the companionship goes forth, with the bread made of honey and flour for the way-bread, twanging their guitars and singing through the town and the pleasant country. Sundays in and about Cologne are full of the music of the Wander-Vögel.

The Church, ever ready to adapt herself as far as may be to human needs and aspirations, has its own Wander-Vögel under other names. You can

hardly walk in a wood in Spring without hearing, amid the songs of the birds, the sound of young human singing, and it is in the silences of the high Summer, the Autumn and Winter. There will come down a glade a line of boys led by a priest, or girls with a nun or some woman-teacher. It is strangely mediæval, that singing line in the woods and forests of Germany; in the Spring especially, when all Nature is jocund; but it is very easy to see how all this Nature-worship might tend to Paganism as it did in the Middle Ages.

“We’ll to the woods and gather May,” was not always as safe and happy a returning as it was a going-forth.

A lady of the Occupation said to me at my first coming: “You should go to the Dom on Sunday mornings at ten and see the devout congregation; it is wonderful.” But it was the same at all the Masses, from 4 a.m. to noon, in all the seventy churches. High officers and officials of the Occupation are accustomed to take their visitors to a Sunday Mass at the Dom, partly for the music—there is a great choir—partly for the preaching, which is eloquent even if one does not understand a word of it: partly also for the spectacle of the devout people. Those of the Occupation with whom I talked were unaware of the seventy Catholic churches beyond the Dom, yet the churches are well worth the knowing, at least the ancient ones.

Mass after Mass at all the seventy churches is

crowded to the doors every Sunday. When the seats are full to their utmost capacity, the rest of the devout congregation stands or kneels. One would need to be in the seventy churches at the same moment, if that were possible, to realise what this connotes of the immense population of Cologne and its piety.

Only once in Italy did I get the same sense of religion. It was in a little Florentine oratory—a War memorial, perhaps—on the banks of the Arno. There was Benediction there every evening and it was attended mainly by the poor, with a large proportion of the old. No person in whom the æsthetic sense was uppermost could have endured the singing. The old priest must have been long superannuated; there was not a note in his voice which was not cracked; and the old men and women were in like case. It would have been a place of torture to the sensitive ear; but, oh, the religion was there! It shone from all the poor old weather-beaten and sorrow-lined faces looking adoringly towards the altar lights—and somehow it was a Holy of Holies; no one ever came there except to pray.

The religion is always in the Cologne churches. The people sing through the Mass, from the tiniest child to the granny, and unlike that Florence oratory there is not a discord in all the flood of singing. It is lovely singing, and there is a light on the faces turned all one way.

If one goes to an early Mass on Sunday or week-

days, it is bound to be a Children's Mass. You cannot escape it. There are Masses for the boys, for girls, for the little children. The boys come in like a swiftly rushing wind. There is the strange order and discipline of German children. They do not fall over each other or their own feet. They have the sense of the queue. They enter and leave the church in perfect order like a ribbon unrolling. There are myriads of them, and even in these days of dire poverty they are well and comfortably clothed—though, with a pang I say it, they are often very pale. The littlest children crowd within the altar rails, where there are seats for them; they may come very near to the Lover of little children: and they walk up the centre of the church with as happy an assurance as the children at San Niccolo at Florence, but with much better behaviour. I have not in eighteen months seen an ill-behaved child in Cologne. When the church is filled with children—for once the adults are put in their places—a shrill childish voice, which penetrates the whole edifice, begins giving out the prayers. There is an utter unself-consciousness about that boy, which, I think, belongs to German children. He recites the prayers from the gallery, and one imagines him as a small saint—a priest in the making perhaps. On Friday morning the schoolboys come in their hundreds with the sound of a rushing wind, all filing into their appointed places, with the strange order and discipline, and as they sing through the Mass the young thrilling and

soaring voices are something not to be forgotten. They are beautiful, those boys, as the Germans often are in youth, but seldom in middle-age or old—tall, slenderly built, with a shock of fair hair and the throat bare in its Byronic collar, the clear colourless skin, the regular features and large eyes.

All voices in Germany are trained and all beautiful in their degree, wherefore I am persuaded that all of us islanders—who, if we try to sing, that very natural expression of joy and well-being, can only utter a squeak—are wronged in our upbringing. Somewhere within us there is a voice of song, undeveloped, atrophied.

An English visitor asked me one day : “ Where shall I hear music in Cologne ? ” I answered : “ At the Opera, the concert halls, the churches ; from the open windows.” I might have added : “ A wandering voice at night.” Even in the daytime the children going by you to school are singing part-songs.

But those boys in the churches—they are perfectly well-mannered at an age when the schoolboy, in numbers, is apt to be a terror to the sensitive. Even if you invade the seats reserved for them, the boys you have crowded out go elsewhere : there is nothing to remind you that you are an intruder. If you glance at a boy you make him very shy, but there is an entire absence of the giggliness which is so common with our Island young. The boys look up sideways at the one who gives out the prayers. They are beautiful boys, despite the ill-fitting German clothes,

tall, broad, made for placid strength. But they are pale, and my keen-eyed companion says that their eyes are all dead tired; they have been used overmuch, and the eyes of those who have gone before them. They are for the factories—the workshops and the professor's desk. "There are no young in Germany," says Mr. Apfel. "They have not time to be young. They must work."

While they sang someone whispered to me: "The 1930-40 class." "God forbid," I answered. That these boys singing "Praise God!" like Browning's Theocrite, that these, and our own dearer boys whom one saw in these, should ever again be rent and torn and poisoned and broken, all their golden youth left "one wet corruption"; the very thought was a blasphemy against the Fatherhood of God. Never again, O women of England, of France, of Germany, never again, shall we permit the horror and the sin, the fruits of which are not yet done with! Let us who bear them see to it that the children be not marked for terrible death!

Yet after I had written this I came to the talk of the Army in Cologne. Ten years! So far away they put the next War; and the scientists are hard at it in the laboratories producing a gas that will poison our children in myriads at a time, unless we see to it that they do not.

CHAPTER IV

THE CHILDREN

ONE of my first experiences of the Rhineland children was to see them walking in procession. It was a rainy and sunny Sunday of June. In the early morning we were awakened to a procession going by with the sound of many feet and the singing of hymns. Every church in Cologne has its processional Sunday, and this was St. Kuni-
bert's. Now there is a tradition in Cologne which only the children believe, that the babies of Cologne come from the great font in St. Kunibert's, so the procession had a special appeal for the children and the lovers of children.

Later when we went forth to Mass we found the streets strewn with green boughs ; temporary trees had sprung up in the night in all manner of unexpected places. The Rhinelanders love a spectacle of any kind. They wait patiently in the muddy Winter streets under the rain to see any British military spectacle, where one might expect them to keep indoors. They are incurably childish people on one side of them ; I have seen the childishness, or child-likeness, I think, even in Prussians.

So all the world was interested in the procession, which at intervals that day came down side-streets, or along the Rings, holding up all the traffic and sending men and women on their knees on the wet pavements.

There was a reverent bare-headed crowd at a street corner, all looking one way, and the trams stood in rows waiting till the procession had passed. We waited with the crowd. There came banners and chanting and surpliced choristers carrying a crucifix and lit candles flickering in the air. After them the singing men and women. Anyone could join the procession, slipping in behind it just as one was and going a little way with it. Over against where we waited was the palace of the Archbishops of Cologne—the Prince-Bishops as they used to be in the Middle Ages. Cardinal Hartmann was there during the War. We remembered that, and the young ex-soldier who was with us whispered in my ear: “A great old War-Bird.”

The procession was by no means a pageant: the people walk in it in their ordinary clothes, old women in caps and shawls, girls in blouses and skirts, hatless, with burnished hair close as the plumage of a bird neatly braided. There was Sunday attire and workaday attire side by side.

But the children! For the first time the children took my heart as they were to take it many times over during my stay in Cologne. They came in white, with tumbling or neatly plaited masses of pale and

golden hair. They went as they pleased for once in a lovely disorder, since many of them were too small to keep in step. Such tiny creatures! some of them hardly taller than a daffodil. Their arms were full of lilies clasped close to their little breasts. They were lambs, they were daisies. The procession went very slowly, just a step at a time, perhaps because of the tiny children, dragging their little feet, helped along by a careful little elder sister who carried sometimes a Crucifix or a statue.

These were the girl children. Hardly less delightful were the little boys, carrying tiny bells which they kept ringing with a grave absorption and delight. They were such innocents that they might have been walking through the streets of Paradise. One remembered :

“ There were boys and girls in the streets thereof.”

Then came the young girls in wreaths and veils, the Children of Mary, followed by the men of the Church Guilds, all singing, the conductor walking backwards before them waving his arms as a baton to keep time. Then the acolytes, the gold-vestured priests; lastly, the gilded canopy and the priest bearing the Sacred Host. As That passed we were all down on our knees in the puddles of pathways worn by the feet of a thousand years.

The procession passed down another narrow street, and suddenly all the traffic came to life like the Palace of the Sleeping Beauty.

So have I seen on the evening of St. Ursula's Day

the Japanese lanterns of her procession tossing in the wet dark down the Ursulnplatz, while the tide of traffic went by.

I am persuaded that we islanders have lost a grace. If only such processions as these could come down Ludgate Hill from St. Paul's and along the Strand, passing by the Cenotaph in which God is not remembered, to Westminster Abbey ; or in grey Dublin streets which used to be so beautiful, although Dublin gives little sign, outside the churches, of her being a Catholic city.

What it might do for worldly and turbulent persons if their hearts were not altogether seared and shrivelled or consumed with hatreds, this reminder of the Kingdom of God !

Let one thing be said for Germany : she has not refused the gift of God, the most precious gift He has bestowed on our mortality, making it immortal, the gift of the children.

A lady of the Occupation who had just returned from visiting the War graves in France, said to me : " As we went through the French villages we saw the children, a child here and there. I wonder what the French think of this town overflowing with children ! "

She might well wonder. There are the multitudes of lambs William Blake saw in his poem. They overflow out of the poor, narrow streets into the wider thoroughfares. Fortunately, Cologne provides more pleasure-grounds for her children than any

other town I know, but there are always the wide streets to cross and the unregulated or ill-regulated traffic. The older children fly by on scooters or roller skates right in the midst of the traffic. I am told that they sometimes get killed or injured. That half the children of Cologne are not killed or injured is a marvel to me. Perhaps St. Ursula and the Eleven Thousand Virgins, the Three Kings and St. Kunibert, with other heavenly personages, are very busy in the Cologne streets. Anyhow, with a stretch of asphalt largely favoured by scooters and roller skates which is also the motor-road stretching before our doors, we have never seen an accident.

There is the Playground across the road. The boulevard divides the traffic in two, and at the farther side the trams run—the linked trams which are so much more dangerous than our single ones, since if there is an accident and you escape the first there are still two to be reckoned with. Apart from the trams the roadway over there is safer than the one directly under our windows, since it has no scooters and the motor-traffic keeps to this side. But one day as we came along we observed four small children, just able to walk, held up in the tram track. Apparently they were on their way to the comparative safety of the Playground when for some reason, or no reason, they paused in the track of the trams: probably they were tired: they were so very little: the eldest could not have been more than two years old.

There was a tram coming and the younger of us, whose heart is in her mouth perpetually because of the Cologne children and the Cologne dogs, rushed to push them into a place of safety. They were so small and helpless that at her touch they fell over and lay in a little heap. They had to be lifted one by one to the Playground, where we left them. How they got back home again, across the dangerous street, I do not know. We had no way of ascertaining where they came from or to whom they belonged. I think they had hardly yet learned to talk.

Perhaps the Germans believe in hardening their children as they harden their dogs. There must be as many puppies nearly as children in Cologne, and the puppies as soon as they can stand on four trembling legs go out with their masters for a walk. A tall and large German man with his puppy is a legitimate subject for the comic artist. In the very busy thoroughfares the puppy goes on a long string, falling over now and again, when his master pauses and allows him to get up without assisting him. In a less crowded thoroughfare the owner will take all the street-crossings without even looking at the puppy. I have seen a child in charge of a pram, and a puppy on a string, lift the puppy for a rest; but the Herr Papa stalks on in apparently sublime disregard of his puppy, and at times of his offspring.

Yet children and dogs have their place in the sun; in eighteen months of Cologne I have not seen an

accident to either. There are Schäfferhunds and many Dachshunds, and also Airedales, an occasional setter, now and again a fox terrier or an *Irischehund*, i.e. Irish terrier ; with a host of tiny dogs of all sorts of breeds or mixed breeds, the strain of the black-and-tan toy terrier predominating. These small dogs are the most spoilt things, but the beautiful free-looking Schäfferhund is kept under strict control and does not always understand a friendly advance. To know the Schäfferhund at his noble best you must know him in British ownership. The idea is, I suppose, to make guards of them. To this end any Sunday morning there is a demonstration at the Aachener Tor, one of Cologne's open spaces, where a man attired somewhat as the gentleman is who advertises the Michelin Tyre, pretends to attack the dog's master. A stranger is never encouraged by the owner to make friends with the Schäfferhund, but the dog caught while he is young and friendly is a delightful creature.

The dogs go with their masters into the restaurants and lie peaceably under the tables, even though there may be a cat in the offing. At the restaurants, not many meals are eaten but much beer is drunk—that is to say in a typical German restaurant, not one of the smart places patronised by the British Occupation which are not aware of Münchener Bier, the true wine of Germany. Papa and Mamma sit over their beer in the restaurant ; young lovers do the same ; and friends, or business-men who want to make a bargain,

will occupy a table of the restaurant for two or three hours and have their talk out over glass mugs of amber-shining beer. One wonders how it can profit the restaurants to have such customers, but apparently they are satisfactory. Papa will drink six tankards of beer to Mamma's one, and the lover three to his lady's one. She, indeed, will drink the smaller measure which is contained in a tall narrow glass as against his round squat mug.

(This was written before the calamitous days of 1923. Before we left Cologne, the Münchener beer was a thing of the past, and the bier-gartens and restaurants were but scantily patronised.)

The whole family usually accompanies Papa and Mamma to the restaurant. The quite little ones wander all over the place, where their presence is no more objected to than the presence of the dogs. In the Summer when all the restaurant doors are open the small children wander out into the street. I never observed that Papa and Mamma were at all anxious. Presently the small adventurer returns and climbs to its chair without anyone taking notice. As a rule they are very friendly children. The littlest one will peep at you from behind a chair, or hide in a curtain, as though it expected you to join in a game of hide-and-seek. But the German child never intrudes : you may be as unconscious of its existence as you please.

Once a little boy stood at my knee in a crowded tram. I wanted to take him in my lap, but the face

of the girl accompanying him, his elder sister or a nursery governess, was unresponsive. One never knew, remembering the War, or one had not grown accustomed to the friendliness. Anyhow, I had to be content with looking down into the child's face which was looking up at me. A child's direct expressionless gaze may be very embarrassing. So my little lad in his green suit and elf-cap gazed at me: but, suddenly, a bewitching smile of the rarest humour and understanding broke over the small face. He was an angel, that infant. I loved his approval, his good-fellowship, from his tiny youth to my grey age. Then the tram stopped and I had to lose him. As I stepped sorrowfully from the tram my young companion's voice spoke in my ear: "You should not flirt with young men you meet in the tram." She had been observing.

Once I saw something I should love to paint. There was an immense patient horse standing under a great waggon-load by the kerb. A child reaching to his knees, with a wild flaxen head—a Shock-Headed Peter—not more than three years old, was feeding the horse with single blades of hay, standing on tip-toe to get the delicacy nearer to the recipient. There were men standing about. No one seemed to notice the incident. The horse's big teeth might so easily have mistaken the little hand for the single grass-blade: but the horse knew better than that. His air of grave politeness was beautiful.

According to insular ideas the restaurant life for the child is to be deplored, but I cannot see that the children are a penny the worse. Ten or Twelve-Years-Old will drink his measure of beer with Papa and Mamma. Of course, the beer is the lightest of beverages, as bright and sparkling as a mountain stream.

The French children also lead the restaurant life. The children of the French officers and sous-officers come in with their parents, their hair all tied up with huge ribbon bows, little trussed-up replicas of Maman, as unlike the simple German children as possible.

Coming with fresh eyes the amazing dramatic elements of the Occupation are for ever forcing themselves on one's attention. One is, or was at first, always asking one's self if one realised sufficiently the strange wonderful pageant of the Occupation which one was looking on at. Those who are actors in it have lost or perhaps never had had the sense of wonder. All this will be over in a few years and those who looked on at it in their youth will say to their children or their children's children: "I saw the Occupation of Germany after the Great War." I shall not live for the marvel of it, but I am very glad to have seen it. The French officers and their families in the German restaurant were a sign and a symbol. I don't think they ever forgot that they were the conquerors and that it was the vanquished who served them, though there was

nothing of swagger in their manner and they were very quiet, much quieter than the British Tommies who came in with a manner of cheerful fraternisation. The French would not fraternise though it came to the last man in a German world, not though the Fraulein is often very charming and he is sensitive to female beauty. The French in Cologne have always an aloof, an austere air.

The German children are urbane to an uncommon degree. To see a composed little German *Mädchen*, or grave-eyed German boy, in a tram full of the children of the British Tommies, not offensive, but very noisy and undisciplined and with ear-splitting accents, was to make one ask oneself whether the constant companionship with their parents, even if it involves the restaurant life and sitting up late at night, is not worth something in the formation of manners and consideration for older people.

More and more I learnt to love and delight in the children. They were the children of the poor streets, of the overflowing families, the quaint children who go alone through the streets or hand in hand. Sometimes you would see a couple of little boys, wearing trousers and shoulder-straps all in one piece, standing hands in pockets, discussing something with intense earnestness, just as their grandfathers might do. Or you would see an infinitesimal child going home carrying a loaf bigger than itself. Or a child of seven or eight carrying a baby, with a strange air of motherliness. Or a big boy leading a little

one, looking down upon it with fatherly eyes. Every time I went up and down those poor streets, between the Ring and the Ursulnkirche, I longed to be able to paint the things I saw. I should say there were no spoilt children in the Rhineland, though they were obviously much beloved. There were too many children perhaps for any one of them to be spoilt. They wandered about quite unattended, with an almost uncanny air of knowing where they were going, even while they were infants.

There was one little boy out of the myriads who went to the Ursulnkirche who always amazed me. He had the immature look of a chick just out of the egg and not altogether awake. His head was as yellow as a new duckling's. He was two years old perhaps, and all that Winter he had a tight trussed-up look because his careful mother had wrapped him up so very well and he had a fur collar to his tiny coat. He always went alone, walking with a perfect confidence although slightly unsteady from being so short a time in the world, like a young shaky thing on four legs. He seemed to be a natural solitary, wearing that uncanny air of knowing where he was going.

Lastly—not that there is any lastly since every time I walked abroad I saw something of new delight in the children—there was Eriga. Eriga was the two-year-old child of the young woman who made dresses for the ladies of the Occupation. Eriga lived with her father and mother in the Sternen-

gasse, over against the old house in which Marie de Médici died and Peter Paul Rubens was born.

When you got in at the heavy door you climbed up the wide stairs past the *ateliers* of the decorator, the signs of whose craft were evident in gilt brackets and cornices and mirrors and furniture up the stairway. There was a wide door to the apartment where Eriga's mother plied her trade without the smallest evidence of it. At our first coming there was a table set for a meal. A young man, presumably Eriga's papa, was feeding the tall white stove with briquettes: the wind was a little cold. The two wide windows were open on to a screen of chestnut leaves in their first green. The room was pleasantly furnished, with cupboards round the walls in light German wood and glass-fronted. There was somehow a suggestion of Paris about the room, of Paris and the Quartier and Young Romance, helped by the fact that Eriga's *Mütter* looked rather French than German.

While we wondered if we had made a mistake because of the absence of any evidence of the dress-maker's trade, the young man took a blue-grey beer-jug and went out. The business of the dress-making proceeded; it was not my dressmaking.

To me came Eriga out of an open doorway into another room, two years old, with a small peaked face, like a very young crescent moon, and straight fair hair—the child of a fairy-tale. I do not know why Eriga should have honoured me with her friend-

ship straight off. She took no heed at all of my younger companion. Unless you have had experience of a conversation conducted by peals of laughter you have no idea of how fascinating it can be.

Eriga and I laughed. A baby's laughter is one of the most silvery sounds in the world. It was an exhilarating medium. Presently, having convinced herself that I was quite the right sort of person, Eriga brought her Teddy Bear and planked him on to my lap. He served as a subject of conversation, for several moments. When he was exhausted Eriga thought of the kitten.

The kitten was not to be taken. She fled under my skirts and from thence to an unknown destination, but it took some time to persuade Eriga that the kitten had flown. After an exhaustive search she had the happy idea that I had swallowed the kitten. She kept pointing to my mouth and shrieking with elfin laughter. It might have been bluebells ringing in a fairy wood, so fine, so thin, was the laughter.

Altogether it was a jolly rag. When I came a day or two later with offerings for Eriga, to my disappointment Eriga "*schläft*." I did not even get a peep at Eriga sleeping. Her mother was bright-eyed over the offering. She laughed like an older Eriga and patted my shoulder.

"Many people love Eriga," she said, "but Eriga does not love many people. She loves you."

It was very gratifying to know that Eriga loved me—gratifying too, to be told that when Pamela appeared alone on the third visit Eriga was obviously disappointed.

When one kneels at the same altar with a people and loves their children one cannot hate that people.

CHAPTER V

THE SWEET ENEMY

WE had come to Germany, as most people of the Allied countries must come with an expectation of enmity, open or concealed, which indeed had its foundation in pre-War days when we were told of the arrogant swaggering and bullying of German officials. The enmity was strangely, inexplicably absent, although we still felt that it must be there and kept saying to each other, as has been often said to us since: "You know they *must* hate us."

A strange people! Was it possible that they had been so ground beneath the Prussian heel that the end of the War was a deliverance? or was it that things had come to that pass that they welcomed even defeat to end it? One often wondered if they had really forgiven the propaganda, the Huns, the atrocity campaign, the corpse-factory, the "Kultur," and all the rest of it.

Long after this sentence was written I said to a highly intelligent German: "It must have been terrible here when the people began to realise that they were going to lose the War, after all the sacrifices they had made." He answered: "I am going

to say a surprising thing. It was the best thing that ever happened to Germany that she lost the War. Any business man will say the same as I do." He made an expressive gesture. "If Germany had won the War you could not have posted a letter without a man with a sword standing by for you to salute. If you forgot to salute, if you were clumsy and stumbled against him . . ." The pause was expressive. So, Militarism—not the Allies—was the enemy.

Apropos of the propaganda a French officer writing in *Le Matin* some months ago said that all the humiliations to German pride were remembered by the young men growing up now who were too young for the War—that the older suffered from the exhaustion of the War: that these young men—he put the number at about six millions—formed the threat for the future.

Another young soldier argues that propaganda is necessary to make War, that men will not fight other men unless you create hatred. One wonders what the German propaganda against us was like in the War. I have not come on any trace of it; but I remember to have been told during the War that while German newspapers were unobtainable in England, all the English newspapers were obtainable at every railway-bookstall of Germany. Pleasant reading they must have been!

I asked my Frau the other day if there was great alarm when the occupying troops came in. She

did not seem to think that there was very great alarm. She had none, she says—but then she had lived in England for eighteen years. She told me that after the first, when she had provided the weary soldiers with tea, they came to her with all their difficulties to translate for them and be their intermediary. One night at eleven o'clock the bell rang. She went downstairs to the door and confronted half a dozen men in khaki. They wanted something which they did not know how to ask for. When she had got them through their difficulty one of them said: "Weren't you afraid, Missus, to come out among all us?" She said: "No: I have lived too long among the English to be afraid of them."

She had another story of a German who, in a propitiatory spirit, had offered a soldier a bottle of wine. He was immediately taken before a military court. His terrified wife implored her, as she could speak English, to go and explain, so she asked to be allowed to make a statement. In the result the man got off with a caution.

The friendliness strikes you at first as unnatural, as though there must be something hidden behind it. The wife of an officer who had come in with the Occupation, who—the officer, I mean—had suffered terribly in a German prison, where he happened to be under a particularly nasty specimen of the Prussian, yet had not lost his boyish gaiety, told me a painful experience of hers. Quite in the early days after the wives were allowed to come out, she and

her husband had been billeted in the house of a German woman who was strangely silent and abstracted. She did all that was needed for them in a dull and lifeless way, and my informant, a cheerful, friendly soul, could make no headway against the dumb aloofness. Day after day the Frau went out for a few hours, coming back home more pale and more abstracted than ever. Then one day she came in like a cold and frozen fury. My friend happened to be alone. "Why are you here?" she cried. "Why are you here? Why am I condemned to the torture of having you in my house, of serving you? I who all these months have watched my husband dying of dreadful wounds that your people have inflicted?"

It was quite true. The man, dreadfully injured, had been dying by inches in hospital. She had just come from his death-bed.

My friend's sole comment upon this tragic tale was "Ah! they should not have billeted anyone on her. It was cruel."

Von Tirpitz in his Memoirs has written very bitterly of a parade of German-American soldiers in New York in honour of Prince Henry. The Germans in America who when the War came found that they were not Germans at all but Americans, so had gone into the ranks against Germany with the rest, were indeed a surprising proposition. My personal experience in the War was that the German wife of a British husband almost invariably made

him pro-German, whereas the English wife of a German husband remained strongly and antagonistically English, without in the least deflecting her mate. But these were people of the professional and middle-classes, and the English wife of a German husband in Germany would probably have her patriotism aroused by the enmity of those about her. My experience would prove, if it proved anything, that the German was more patriotic than the Englishman. Patriotism was certainly dormant in many Englishmen prior to the War. Englishwomen at home must have been influenced by the propaganda.

Von Tirpitz said contemptuously that the Germans are patriotic without having national pride. I have found people to dispute the patriotism, saying that the rich Germans had taken their money out of the country during the War and had invested it in England. Further, that if they, the rich men, had chosen, they could have checked the downward course of Germany since the War. It is very difficult to generalise about a country made up of so many different elements as Germany. There are always the Jews. There could be no comparison between the Germany of pre-Prussian days, with whom one associates the Christmas-tree, Santa Claus and the fairy-tales, Germany the Toy-maker, and the German Prison Camp Commandant who, in the experience of the officer mentioned in a preceding paragraph, when a complaint was made about the

food, flung everything, meat, soup, vegetables, tea, sausages, cheese into a common cauldron and bade the prisoners be content with that.

The Germans are not all Prussians and therefore of a cast-iron mind. The beautiful black-and-white houses, the forests, the gardens; the churches, the very hills and singing streams, the children, the friendly people, cry out against such a supposition. The factories may be Prussian—the country never. Certainly, in the Rhineland, there is not the Prussian character though the Congress of Vienna in 1815 made it Rhenish Prussia. Even the religion is against it.

Let me quote Von Tirpitz.

“It was with sad feelings that I witnessed in New York an enormous torchlight procession of 14,000 German ex-soldiers all in their prime, in honour of Prince Henry. If the question of nationality was ever broached with these people the answer was: ‘We think of Germany as our Mother, but America as our wife and we must stand by her!’ The ideals with which the home-country had endowed them were very soon forgotten for the sake of the material advantages of American life. A professor belonging to a good German family, who had been lecturer at a German University, was taking me over Harvard. He had only gone out to America a few years before, but he told me that he had already become an American citizen. Quite against my will he must have seen the impression

made upon me by his remark ; for he said to the naval officer accompanying me : ‘ Your Chief seems to wonder at my becoming an American citizen so soon, but you will understand, for I have been made a professor here sooner than I should have been in Germany and I must be grateful ! ’ I mention such examples in order to characterize the lack of national pride, sentiment, and obligation which is fatally inherent in our people.

“ With these experiences and impressions of the German tendency in my mind, celebrations and the unveiling of monuments, of which there was no lack with us, always left me cold. In keeping with the national character which they brought with them from their homeland, the 10,000,000 North Americans of German origin have watched Germany go to her ruin without lifting a finger. How different is the case of the Irish.”

Perhaps the old Prussian was right. My young soldier at my elbow suggests that the pride and insolence of Junkerism is a protest against this lack of National pride. It would explain the whole attitude of friendliness and also the manner much commented upon in England at the time in which German sailors took the handing-over of their ships after the War. After all, we have forgotten how strongly Socialistic Germany was for many years before the War. Socialism would be the very negation of Nationalism, or private property in a country or a fleet, or any sort of birthright whatever.

One had become too much accustomed to the cynical indifference to the fate of the ex-soldiers in England to be very critical, yet I could not but feel amazed at this experience when we were looking for a flat. The flat was a large one owned by a German lady and her daughter. They were very anxious that we should have a suite of rooms within it. The only obstacle—produced at the last moment—was that it was in the occupation of a German Major and his family. Of course, he was paying a much smaller rent than we should pay and he had been given notice to quit more than once, but he had not gone. The proposal of the German lady was that we should endeavour to get the influence of the British Military Authorities to evict him. That she should think such a thing possible was strange enough, but that she should be ready to use that alien power, if it was possible, against a soldier who had fought for Germany certainly deserved such disdain as Von Tirpitz poured upon his defaulting country-people.

It was very different from France where to have fought for France is an "Open Sesame."

But there are not many impoverished soldiers to be seen in the streets of the German town, no such scandalous sights as the legless and armless men one used to see all down Regent and Oxford Streets in the years following the War.¹ There are indeed, singularly few reminders of the War. Someone told

¹ They are still to be seen.

me once that the badly maimed and disfigured men are not allowed to appear in the German public places. There are, I know, workshops for them and compartments in the trains, as there are special seats in the churches: and every tenth man in a German factory must be a man incapacitated in the War. The occasional blind man with his patient gaze turned Heavenward to the unanswering stars, the limping, the one who goes with a sideways gait, do not make an aggregate of suffering greater than one saw in the streets of any large town before the War. The disfigured, the men shot in the face one never sees, nor anything that could mean a concealed disfigurement. The Germans do better than we do by their soldiers.

We used to buy our English papers sometimes from the ex-mate of the *Gneisenau* who stands outside Barclay's Bank. That too was to live in History. How little we could have imagined in the days when we talked of the *Gneisenau* and the *Scharnhorst*, when they sunk off the *Coronel* the light cruisers, the *Good Hope* and the *Monmouth*, an action to be punished later by the Battle of the Falkland Islands, that we should yet be buying our English papers in Cologne from a man wearing a ribbon of the Iron Cross, with a soft voice and a persuasive manner, who had been the ex-mate of the *Gneisenau*.

When you speak of his Iron Cross he says: "I did nothing to earn it and I get nothing for it," and is quite philosophical when you desert him for the Irish

ex-serviceman who has set up his paper-stall under the pillars of the "Excelsior." These things are in the day's work, like the sinking of the light cruisers.

But all the same, Germany provides for her ex-servicemen. Her public departments are crowded with them. Everything is run at a loss in Germany, but there is no unemployment.

In the Summer of the year in which this was written we used to go out every Sunday to the beautiful country beyond Königsforst for a picnic-tea in the woods. The nominal railway fare was 500 marks, but it was long, long since one possessed a 500 mark note with the mark at millions to the pound, so we travelled free. I have no explanation for the fact that we travelled in empty trains, while the white trams going in the same direction, where people did pay, were packed to overflowing. After all, what was the good of saving the mark which grew more worthless every day? Put it into something solid. Build houses with it, build even statues in your streets, raise a great exhibition to which the world may come, bringing pounds and dollars instead of marks. If you employ the people there will be no fear of revolution. The middle-classes sink back into the people, or die of starvation. They will not make a revolution, and the people were kept too busy to think about it.

I used to think that the amazing activities of the town came from the local authorities—the construction of one thing and another, the washing of the

streets even in rainy weather, the careful ordering of gardens and parks which keep employed an army of men sound and unsound. No such thing! These activities are directed by Government, from Berlin. I was told the other day that the Municipality of Trier, otherwise Trèves, was instructed from Berlin to make a new drainage system. Trier was disinclined. She was quite satisfied with the primitive system she had got. Berlin became peremptory; with a pistol to her head, so to speak, Trier made new drains.

Germany is facing her ever-increasing housing problem. Houses in Germany spring up like mushrooms. You have but to fall asleep and wake up and a house is built. It is the same all over Germany. She has run up charming, if slightly jerry-built, houses for the British Occupation which will return to her one of these days. Her people are employed and the wages soar with the food prices. Using the bankrupt mark she has wrung value from it as though it was gold.

But there is always the problem of the teeming population. If all Germany was like the Catholic Rhineland, which will not have Birth Control, she could not contain her people. As it is she must expand, she must overflow. That is her urgent need and her danger for other peoples. France can contain her dwindling population—not Germany. The Germans, like the English, have great qualities as colonists. Why should they not overflow into the immense spaces of Russia?

CHAPTER VI

ALARUMS AND EXCURSIONS

MY first experience of German country and German people of the un-Prussianised sort was in the company of a lady of the Occupation, who took us for a delightful day in the country in enchanting June weather. That was to be my very last motor drive for nearly a year. Our charming hostess of that day went away. We often sighed after her. Those warnings about the weather to be expected in Cologne ; the lack of helpfulness when we suggested looking for a flat. In the light of other knowledge I have an idea that there was a quite praiseworthy conspiracy in high places to send the civilians home. Though the Army officially accepted no responsibility for them they congested still further an already congested area. The Occupation was very much pleased to see you passing through, but you were not wanted as a permanency in Cologne. It might happen that circumstances would arise in which the civil power, i.e. the British Consul, might call upon the Army to defend civilians, and that would be a pretty kettle of fish for the official Army. (The Army as men and brothers was quite another matter.) I once heard a young officer in the War

describe civilians as "useless mouths," but that point of view did not occur to us till we too had become Occupants.

However, that lovely day in June we had no blank misgivings as to our being civilians, and our hostess, I am sure, had none. She was unique in kindness and charm in those early days in Cologne. It was already hot enough to make the thirty miles' motor drive and the long delicious country afternoon an ease and a delight.

Away and away we sped, over the Hohenzollern Bridge and through the hideous manufacturing districts that lie across the Rhine, making one feel that man if he can be the great artist is also the great defiler, till at last we got into open country. It was a toy country, the lovely country beyond Königsforst, which we were to know well and love well later. The villages were clean and shining, all black-and-white houses and cottages with brilliant red roofs. As we ran towards Overath the roadside limes were changed for apple trees. Far down and far down went the long perspective of the apple trees, on which the fruit had just formed. One could believe it was a ravishing sight in Spring and only less ravishing in Autumn, for the ripe apple on the low bough is only less beautiful than its blossom.

The Renault took some cork-screw curves and twists. We ran along high ground, a valley to either side, with wonderful glimpses of the distant country. All around were gentle hills and stretches of forest.

We were in a world as remote from War and modernity, except that every cottage had its electric light, as Cloud-Cuckoo-Country.

As we neared Overath we became aware of a little railway line zigzagging beside us. We crossed and re-crossed the tracks. We ran through Overath and by a dark belt of trees ; there was a river and a wooden bridge. Facing us across the bridge was an iron Army hut of noble dimensions, which had been transformed to a country-cottage.

We had been many weeks in sweltering towns ; and, not since the time when I was a Londoner escaped into the deep country that I used to cry for, have I felt the rapture of regaining the country's heart and arms as I felt it that day.

An Army hut is not a beautiful object externally, but when it has a kitchen garden up to its eaves, window-boxes flowering at every window, flower-beds in the grass : when the dearest old couple imaginable come to meet and welcome you—they might have stepped out of Grimm or Peter Rosegger—when the cool wind from the hills takes you in a soft embrace : when, by the dark wood, the little train goes by tinkling a cow-bell, why, you *are* in Cloud-Cuckoo-Country, or with Grimm and Peter Rosegger ; and War and all the evil things of the world are clean forgotten, or just “old, unhappy, far-off things.”

Joseph and Maria were a delight. They adored the British General's wife and Lulu, her Pekinese.

She had to see all the growth, the improvements, since her last visit, perhaps a week earlier. There was a brood of new chicks to be inspected. A rose had opened; and the window-boxes had come to fuller flower. There was a goose which had been presented to Joseph and Maria for their Christmas dinner. Since they could not endure to kill it, having made a pet of it, it wandered about like a pet dog. It was called Marius, regardless of its sex and the eggs it produced.

Such a delectable lunch and tea, with heaped dishes of fresh fruit and cream! The cows had begun to return to the country districts, though the return was slow, and Cologne must still exist on tinned milk. Veal is still the staple meat in Germany, because there is no grass, and the teeming population must be fed. Otherwise the policy of killing the calves would seem a mad one. As we wandered about we met Joseph going to and returning from the village, with a basket, fetching eggs for the omelette, oil and vinegar for the salad, always cheerful and running at the call of his indomitable spouse, for whom the handsome and soldierly British corporal who was our chauffeur washed up and performed other household duties.

It was to recapture that heaven of long ago when, new-escaped from a fainting London one woke to low country rooms and the songs of the birds and the dew, and the dawn through a lilac-tree.

Some of the party fished for trout in the river,

which had some very good trout-pools. Others, in a happy leisure, strolled to the Schloss, a beautiful old house, built round a courtyard, moated on all sides, still bearing the traces of where the chains ran that pulled up the drawbridge. The last owner, an old lady and unmarried, had died not long before.

I cannot imagine anyone outside a fairy-tale living in that house: it was so beautiful and quiet, lying under the quietness of a spell. The windows had strange lights in them, green and rose. There was the most delicate ironwork I have ever seen, fine as the finest lace, in the gate and the balustrading of the steps. A fairy might have flung her cobweb veil and an enchantment turned it to iron.

It was an exquisite day. As we went home under the green aisles, by the sleeping villages, the long lines of white posts marking the road brilliant in the head-lights, it was too fine for anything but Fairyland.

The little trains had gone asleep for the night. Such leisured trains! Yet the guard had told a questioner that they went to Berlin. Well, they might, if there was a Cloud-Cuckoo-Land aerial service to pick up their passengers where the trains end in a field.

But War! Oh, incredible! Although there is a monument on the hillside to those who fell in '70. The valley must have slept through the nightmare of the Great War. It is unbelievable there. Yet the French had occupied Overath and had placed a Senegalese sentry on the bridge: and were to occupy it again before many months were gone by.

I have given the account of that day just as I wrote it at the moment while I was still under the influence of the joys of it. It was my first experience in real life of such German peasants as old Joseph and Maria. They had all the qualities of simplicity and faithfulness, of a perfect integrity which I had known in Irish servants long ago. Their way with our hostess was beautiful. It combined perfect respect with familiar affection as the old Irish knew how to do it.

We had not grown accustomed to the *bouleversement* of all our ideas about Germany. We thought of the lady of the Occupation sleeping, as she often slept, in the iron hut by the railway line, outside the Occupied Area, and wondered if it would have been as safe in England if the positions had been reversed or even if they had not been. Perhaps, for when all is said and done the English and the Germans are the same race, as Pat used to remark to Cecil Chesterton when he came home on leave from France, to C. C.'s intense indignation.

We heard the old couple's affectionate messages to the General. When he had been ill they had gone all the way to Cologne to see him—and the little train with the tinkling cow-bell takes the greater part of a day to travel between Overath and Cologne—bringing him as an offering for a sick man, a goose—which someone else must have killed.

After all, the main difficulties in healing the wounds of the world must be the irreconcilables, most often,

those who did not get the same opportunity of working off the War ferment as did the men who were in it. There were still ladies in Cologne when we came who thought it wrong for a man to give his seat to a German woman in the tram ; held also that it gave away the British prestige when an island girl stood up for a German woman with a basket or a baby. And there were many like them at home, usually those who had not suffered. Fortunately it is not such counsels that prevail.

But, despite Joseph and Maria, we were still afraid of a hidden enmity. I was still afraid of the streets after dark. Still, when I had locked my bedroom door at the "Kaiser Wilhelm," did I feel that I was enclosed in a comfortable fortress. Still, when I lay a day in bed and my tray was brought by a waiter who, having laid it down, lingered, eyeing me with the large and child-like curiosity which is a German trait, did I say to myself : " Supposing he should remember that I was of the enemy and murder me ! "

One day we had a sufficiently alarming adventure for new-comers, who still lived behind the locked and barred gates of ignorance of the language. We had gone out to do some shopping, with a rendezvous for tea at the "Germania" with Pat. It was after lunch ; we noticed that the shops were mainly shut, but Cologne shuts up from 1 to 3. It is part of the immense leisureliness of the most business-like nation on earth and the most efficient. I do not believe in the efficiency of a people that labels itself business-

like and pretends to hustle. I believe in the business qualities of my own people as they used to be, and perhaps may be again, who made business an adventure and a human touching, instead of a lifeless matter of sale and barter. We did not notice that day, or noticed without understanding, that some people who had taken down their shutters were putting them up again. It might be the German way, for all we knew.

We wandered along by the Rings and down the Mittelstrasse, wishing that the shops would hurry up and open. A good many men, mostly young, and of the working-class, or at least the class that does manual labour, were going the same way as we went; but then there are always hurrying crowds in Cologne, crowds that get in your way all the time and endanger your life by crossing your path at a sharp angle just when you are running from a motor or the trams which dangerously fill up the narrow streets. At the end of the Mittelstrasse, where it passes into the Neumarkt, we saw groups gathering, but our attention was distracted by the sudden discovery of the Apostelnkirche, which our friend, Colonel Patrick Butler, late of the Royal Irish Regiment, had bidden us to see. He is an inveterate church-hunter, and many a time I have longed for him in Cologne, where I have found no one of my own speech with my own passion, so that I have seen few details of the wonderful churches.

Caught into the shadows and dim gold of the

Apostelnkirche we forgot the groups in the Neumarkt, though we had an idea that the Neumarkt, to which all roads run, set in the midst of old Cologne, might be a storm-centre.

When we came back again to the daylight, processions of men were converging upon the Neumarkt from every approach. Then began a hurrying and a scurrying for us. Every cross-road and cross-street brought its procession. If we scurried across one thoroughfare under the ægis of the German mounted police, who sit their horses magnificently in the thoroughfare, beautiful to look at, we were held up at the next street corner. How often we turned back and doubled upon quiet streets without a sign of life, only to be caught in the procession at the next corner, I could not count. There were myriads of men. Every house and shop was shut. We still believed that English speech in such circumstances might prove our doom. What chance would we have with all those closed doors if rioting suddenly broke out? The one thing we felt was that we must keep a guard upon our lips—feign dumbness, if need be.

The German crowd, like the English, is a very orderly one. Like the English the Germans do not “revolute” easily: they are too sensible. “The Revolution has been accomplished,” said a British General, more thoughtful than his fellows. “It has been accomplished in the fall of the mark and the return of the professional class to the working-class.”

The crowd was very quiet. Only once at a street corner, when a mounted policeman tried to divert the procession to make a thoroughfare, there were angry shouts from the crowd, which sent us rushing back the way we had come.

The procession was really only alarming by reason of its enormous numbers. There were rivers of men, streaming, streaming. It was a Socialist demonstration against the murderers of Rathenau, and was being held with the permission of the British Command. Since it was anti-Imperialist it was not at all menacing to us, but, of course, we did not know that. When at last we had been admitted to the "Kaiser Wilhelm" and the door closed and locked behind us—no place in Cologne opened its doors while the demonstration lasted—it was a very haven of refuge. When we sat drinking our tea in the spacious room upstairs, with the open window looking down the Rings, over the fountain and the statues of the Hohenzollern on his charger and the Kaiserin Augusta, we felt that it was really worth while to have been in the wars to have obtained such port after stormy seas

CHAPTER VII

WE GO NORTH

PAT, when he wrote home of the kindness of the people in the first days of the Occupation, had added to the tale of brotherliness : " I think it is partly policy."

He might be excused for thinking that. When we turned our faces towards the Baltic Sea we said to ourselves, with some trepidation : " We shall see how it is outside the Occupied Area." We should never have undertaken that journey if we had not been reinforced by an old brother-officer of Pat's in the Dublins and his wife, who had been sufficiently long in Germany to know the ropes and have no alarms.

Our journey—we left Cologne at midnight and reached our destination about four o'clock the next day, travelling almost without intermission—cost us, first class, with sleepers, about six shillings a-piece of our money. We started with the exhilarated holiday-feeling which is so delightful a thing. We were not to be damped by the crampedness of the sleepers, nor the sorrowful indignation of the little old man who was attendant on the sleepers and made

us tea at intervals during the night, when he discovered that in endeavouring to open a window we had pulled down the blind from its place. He was own brother to Joseph at Overrath, and, though he said that the matter must be reported to the Railway Authorities, we knew that his indignation was quite inoperative. We could have pointed out to him, if we had had the language, that it was much worse for us, especially for the one who occupied the upper berth and invariably happened to be clambering down the ladder whenever we ran into a station. The publicity of that sleeper without a blind was sufficient punishment for the too great haste which had pulled down the blind. Another matter of complaint might have been that the train arrived at Hamburg an hour before its appointed time. However, we had frustrated that trick by being early risers; and we had something to be thankful for in the fact that we had not stopped at too many stations.

Our destiny was Brunshaupten, which, with its companion, Arendsee, lies by the edge of the Baltic. The latter part of the journey was by a delicious little tram which *smelt* of soap and water—no stuffy cushions, but clean white wooden seats. I remember now that we had only just time to catch it at the station where we left the main line, and only caught it by the kindness and readiness of our fellow-passengers, who made room for us and helped in our luggage as though they had been waiting for us for

many days and were overjoyed that we had come at last. It was a glorious day, one of the very last of the brief Summer of 1922. The train was one of those common in Germany which are sometimes trains and sometimes trams. You might make a story of it: "The Tram that Became a Train." . . . Now it is a prosaic tram running on rails through the streets of a town: suddenly it becomes a train, with an enclosed track of its own, running through wide fields, by woods the trees of which send out their branches to resist the monster. The little train for Brunshaupten and Arendsee ran at first through deep pine-woods. There was a hot, clean, sweet smell of the sun-scorched pines and all the growing things. Now and again, down the long streets of the pines, you caught a glimpse of blue sea and the bathers going down with towels over their shoulders. Sometimes there was a hotel, one of those delightful foreign hotels, with cream-coloured walls and green outside shutters, which when you see them on a post card stir the *Wanderlust* in your heart.

The stations were ridiculous. They very often are in Germany—just a little shed and a tiny platform. Quite good enough, too, for a train that may become a tram at any moment.

The pine-woods were heavenly that hot summer day; the branches were swishing the windows with a sense of coolness, and all the clean friendly people in the new-scrubbed tram-train were making up by smiles for your lack of their language. From

the pine-woods we ran amid immense cornfields stretching from horizon to horizon under a great sky. There the corn was swishing the sides of the train which no one had troubled to enclose. It was all so clean, so bright, so fresh, so *plein-air*, that one basked in the heat and loved it. It reminded one of hot Summer days at home in the country, with raspberry jam in the making and a smell in the house of that, of clean linen being ironed, and a baking of bread.

Brunshaupten was just a couple of long streets at right angles, with villas and hotels and their serving shops which had an unsubstantial air as though they were just run up for the season. Again there were all the bright, warm-coloured houses and the steeply sloping green roofs and the outside shutters and balconies and French windows, irresistibly recalling the illustrations to fairy-stories in the bright colours of the Christmas-books. The principal avenues of Brunshaupten and Arendsee look on the Baltic through a thin coppice of pines : at the back the pinewoods stretch for miles, till they form the boundary on that side of the great cornfields. Birds were singing everywhere in Brunshaupten the day we came. They were singing all the time we stayed, weeks after our island songsters had fallen dumb. I suppose they began later than ours. Brunshaupten and Arendsee are a frozen waste in Winter, when the Baltic, before it freezes over, drifts its icebergs on to the sands where in

Summer the hooded chairs mimic them. Judging from the pictures I have seen of the place in Winter nothing could live there except polar bears and wolves. I have not heard of these inhabitants, but the birds surely—the larks and linnets and thrushes and tits—must have all been migrants. Anyhow, we had a double season of song that Summer, which was something to be thankful for.

The “Kaiserhof,” to which we were bound, was as green and white and radiantly clean as all the rest. After Cologne and the train journey the green and white rooms, with the verandah looking on the sea, made a cool delight.

We had come from one German hotel to another, with the difference that the whole population of Brunshaupten and Arendsee was German. We were the only English-speaking group on the coast, and one of us came from G.H.Q. Cologne, and another was an ex-officer of the Dublin Fusiliers. These facts were soon perfectly well-known to our fellow-guests at the hotel, since the Germans have an insatiable curiosity and stop at nothing to gratify it.

This then was a test case as to German friendliness. We were a couple of hundred miles from the Occupied Area. We were in Lutheran Mecklenburg instead of the Catholic Rhineland: I think I may advance it that a Catholic population is usually more friendly and expansive than a Protestant one, not because of the Catholicism, but

because of the racial characteristics which go with the religion.

At Brunshaupten one saw, close at hand, the German family life. It was an extraordinarily respectable place. The families went out in groups, long lines of them, walking arm-in-arm, Papa, Mamma and all the sons and daughters. They went to bathe together. They walked together in the pine-woods. Together they listened to music or danced at the Kurhaus or Kursaal. The families seemed quite sufficient for each other. The entertainments were very quiet ones: there was a singular absence of rowdiness.

We discovered that a girl could walk alone in the evening, even after dark, without any demonstration on the part of the German young men she might encounter, even though she was obviously an "Englisher."

One night we were at a carnival at the Casino. The place was a maze of Japanese lanterns and floating brilliant draperies and toys of all sorts and coloured lights and what not. There was dancing in a very narrow space, and everyone tried to lasso the dancers and each other by flinging darts with long streamers of coloured paper. The islanders joined furiously in the game, catching German strangers in these impalpable fetters. It was like a very gay Christmas party.

Of course, places like Brunshaupten and Arendsee exist for fine weather. Since people are supposed

to live out of doors, no sitting-room accommodation is provided. When the weather broke there were only the hall and staircases of the "Kaiserhof" for those who did not sit in their bedroom, happily occupied with work, as I did.

It rained on end for days, and it was then that I mentally took off my hat to the German baby. The "Kaiserhof" was full of children, many of tender ages. Can you imagine the misery of an English hotel under similar circumstances? Here, all day long, the Herr Papas played with the babies, and I heard laughter of very young children pealing like tiny bells of paradise all day long outside my bedroom door. The sound made up for the wet days and the livid sea and the shadows of clouds in the room. It was broken into by deep masculine gutturals. The romps must have been very gentle, since they never disturbed me; I dare swear that in many wet days at the "Kaiserhof" I never heard a crying child. Crying children are noticeably rare in Germany. I think they must be taught not to cry—as a discipline. Once I saw a small child tumble down half a dozen steps that led to the restaurant. She picked herself up with a bewildered laugh, which was rather touching, patted her little skirt and ran on to her table, where no one seemed to have observed her fall. A child at home would have made a prodigious scene for a lighter fall than that.

There were delicious children at the "Kaiserhof"—

noticeably there was Lili, a miniature Parisian like her Mamma. They were Roumanians; Lili's Papa was in the Diplomatic Service, but they were French to the finger-tips. Lili's Mamma, like Lili herself, had a *chic*. Certainly the German children looked heavy beside Lili, who in her little jumper and skirt was adorable. I had the happiness to present Lili with a market-basket suited to her age and beauty. She carried it wherever she went and it gave her the last touch of demureness. She never smiled; she was shy and used to try to slip past our table without the ordeal of a handshake; but beyond that she was a perfect lady.

Other children there were, charming, if without Lili's supreme *chic*. There was a delightful infant beginning to walk who used to stand balancing himself precariously before he tumbled, with gurgles of laughter. There was another little boy, Teddy, the son of an American lady married to a German. Teddy was fuller of the joy of life than any child I had seen up to then. One always felt inclined to hold him down by his little frock—he was still in the frock stage—lest he should fly up like a balloon. He had a brother of sixteen who stood, his mother said, seven feet. He had certainly a giant's height, but otherwise he looked a rather pathetic sixteen. He had acquired a habit of walking with his head bent from the shoulders, partly perhaps because he avoided striking his head as he entered at a low door, but also because of excessive shyness,

poor child ! Of course, even mannerly people stared at him when he came in view.

To see him taking Teddy for a walk, Teddy dancing along by that solemn height, holding on to the extreme tip of a finger reached down as far as it could, was sheer delight.

Teddy's Mamma told me that her big boy had sprung up like that during the War, when he had been fed on substitutes. He was, of course, very delicate, with his abnormal height. She told me a story of how in the War her husband had been able to render some service to an English officer. I fancy the officer was a prisoner. At all events, he was the possessor of a very fine pair of blankets, a most uncommon and enviable luxury in Germany then.

"Look here," he said one day to Teddy's father, "take these; I shall not need them; and make them into a suit of warm clothes for that delicate boy of yours."

She added that the blanket-suit had saved her boy's life.

I spoke to this lady, who was extremely kind and helpful, about the friendliness which had so much surprised us. She said: "The Germans have no hate in their hearts. They are not a hating people."

The one thing about which she was very angry—and I found English and German women, and Englishmen as well, at one with her in this—was the use

of coloured troops in the French Occupation. This is a matter which makes many people see red in Germany, though I have been told their discipline is of the strictest, and up to then I had heard no tales of their running amok. But the Germans regarded their presence as something intolerable and unforgivable, and no wonder. Of course, the French were occupying an enormous stretch of territory—they had a hundred thousand troops in the Rhineland then to our eight thousand or so—and to provide that number of French soldiers would be a matter of some difficulty. (This was written before the French came into the Ruhr.) As one travelled through the French Occupied Territory one saw these coloured troops on duty. There were Senegalese sometimes—but oftener the brown-skinned Algerians or Moors, very picturesque, with beautiful colouring. I saw a number of them at the Requiem for the Allied Dead at the Minoritenkirche on All Soul's Day, 1922. One wondered what thoughts were going on under the scarlet fezzes, behind the large lustrous eyes.

They are, of course, not a negroid type, but very handsome with fine features. Did not Desdemona fall in love with a Moor? At Trier that Autumn of '22 I saw one of the cavalry—a splendid person in white and scarlet, with flowing robes and a turban.

I had noticed the comradeship with which the ordinary French soldiers met and talked with these

coloured men, and I remembered the British Tommy with whom we travelled from Bonn, whom we asked what he thought of the dark men :

“They smell,” he said; and, being slow of expressing himself, that ended it.

My American lady was very excited about the dark troops.

“It is not Christian,” she said vehemently, “it is not Christian. I’ll tell you what we do with the blacks in our country. We pour petrol on them and set them afire.”

When I praised the German Papas to a lady of the Occupation, who was highly intelligent and quite agreed with the praise, she said, “I fear it is only when the children are little.” Perhaps there is not the friendship between the father and his stripling sons which exists in England. I remember the terrible question of child-suicide in Germany which I used to hear discussed years before the War. Those suicides were chiefly among schoolboys—if they failed in an exam., or got into trouble of any kind. My husband when he was in Munich in 1887 had a case of this kind in the house where he was staying. There was a very attractive boy, the son of his landlady, in whom he and the other Irishman from T.C.D., his travelling companion, were interested. They came home one day from an expedition to find a crowd round the house. The woman herself was in the hall. “My son has committed suicide,” she explained. He had been

accused of stealing money and did not wait to justify himself.

I once asked a German if there were still child-suicides in Germany. He said "Yes! You see, if the boy fails he loses his place and the school-master is angry with him and his father is angry."

I took it to mean that when one had lost one's place in Germany there is very little chance of getting up again. The crowd rushes over one. It is the enormous population: one must not lose one's place.

Mr. Apfel on the other hand, that intelligent and educated German Jew, said that the reign of the tyrannical father and the tyrannical school-master was past. Emancipation had begun even before the War and the War had hastened it. As with us the young have put the old in their places. But he too said: "You must not lose your place or you will not recover it."

After a time we became confident that the people at the "Kaiserhof" and outside did not regard us as enemies, any more than the people in the shops who laughed cheerfully over our attempts to make them understand and sent us off with *Wiedersehen!* coming to the doors of their shops to wave their hands in farewell. I do not know anyone who can laugh with so little offence as a German. I think it is because they do not possess the mocking spirit. They laugh with and not at you. I have been laughed at and my mistakes have been laughed at during

many months in Germany more than in all the years of my life. But it is laughter that has no sting: rather it makes you happy.

In the same way I have never seen anyone "guyed" in the street or elsewhere. That particular form of cruelty is strangely absent.

Mr. Apfel says: "But to be ugly; to be strange; to meet with an accident: they are misfortunes. We do not laugh at misfortunes."

The only place where the Germans laugh at misfortune is on the picture post-cards. But, after all, perhaps the Germans do laugh at misfortunes. It may be the Rhinelander who does not. Mr. Apfel at least laughed impartially. He brought us from his precious library, *Mr. Punch's History of the War* to amuse us—Heavens, how the jest had gone out of it all!—pointing out to us with an incredible aloofness the things which had amused himself. But perhaps that was his politeness.

CHAPTER VIII

STILL BRUNSHAUPTEN

THEY will tell you in Germany when they talk of the ruin to which so many have come, "You are not to mind the Jews and the profiteers whom you see crowding the restaurants."

There are Jews and Jews. Mr. Apfel is a Jew. So also were the rich Germans with whom for my sins I travelled by *train de luxe* to Rome in May, 1914. But there is a world of difference between his young bright personality and keen intelligence and those very ugly Hebrews. Probably they are to be seen in Berlin and Hamburg. I have not since encountered their like.

Profiteers in Germany are known as *Scheibers*, i.e. pushers, strivers.

There was a considerable sprinkling of *Scheibers* at the "Kaiserhof," but they did not flaunt their riches and they were oddly patient with horrid cookery. Lili's Mamma explained :

"The Germans do not mind bad cooking as long as they have plenty to eat ; they are not *gourmets*."

Perhaps the cosmopolitan Jew made for tolera-

tion. There were two little shaven-head boys, whom we called the Mice, because of the grey skin showing through the imperceptible hair, who became great friends with us. They used to pull up as they passed our table, put their heels together with a military click and bow stiffly. Father and Mother Mouse looked on with the greatest satisfaction at this friendship between us and their offspring. There was always a bit of a rag when the Little Mouse, who was shy, was prevented by Pat as he was speeding by like an arrow. Pat was their particular friend. I think the other parents were a little jealous of the notice the Mice excited. The Mice were photographed with some of our group on the sands, and the photograph, being offered to Father and Mother Mouse, was accepted with obvious gratification. There was a solemn exchange of courtesies between our party and theirs, the more solemn because neither of us understood the other.

The Mouse family was from Vienna. At another table, a little removed from ours sat two school-girls, who used to go about arm in arm or with an arm about each other's necks. They were school-friends. Nice little school-girls are very attractive creatures; and we noticed them to discover that their regards were always on our table. They had conceived what Pamela called a "*pash*" for her. Presently they were stopping to speak to us in English, very slow and careful English that sounded

like a set lesson. When we left on an August morning that looked like November the two were in the hall, the mother of one seated in a deep chair, placidly sewing by the grey light. They had a huge bunch of carnations for an offering to Pamela; addresses were exchanged and promises to write: the last we saw of the "Kaiserhof" was the wistful gazing after us of the dark and fair little girls with the "*pash*" for Pamela as we drove away.

Once we came on the Judenhetze. We had thought of leaving the "Kaiserhof" because they gave us such nasty things to eat, or rather we pretended to think it, for we knew that the cooking was alike all over Brunshaupten: or rather the food, for we got little else but sausages and smoked eels. So we went out one day inspecting other hotels and *pensions*; it amused us and did not do the proprietors any harm beyond raising hopes not to be fulfilled.

At one place we went to we were interviewed by a good-looking youngish man dressed in what we would call in England plus-fours. He looked like a Scout-leader. I say "interviewed by" advisedly: we did not get in a word. One felt good works in the air. A sad-looking woman, who might have been the good-looking man's elderly wife or young mother, reeked of them, done under compulsion perhaps, or at least without joy. On the threshold he asked us if we were "*Kristen*." I imagined a Lutheran aversion from Popery, but I was wrong. Through

a great deal of conversation on his part we discovered that we might be anything but Jews. No Jew should cross that threshold.

When we had satisfied him on that point we "went over" the house; I am bound to say that no Jew with anything of the joy of life or the love of colour would set foot in it. It had the atmosphere of a dark and ugly religiosity. But he was very good-looking, that man, with a fine ruddy complexion and bright eyes—a healthy fanatic.

An odd thing was that I never could discover a church in Brunshaupten or Arendsee, though I looked for one. I once saw a girl in the pine-wood carrying a wreath but failed to follow up that clue. I had committed myself to the statement that God was forgotten in Brunshaupten and Arendsee, had sent it to the newspapers, but happily the libellous statement did not get printed before I found the church—on a post-card, a little low Lutheran church, with a few graves under its eaves, all its windows lit with talc, or something bright. I never could find the church in actual being and no one could tell me where it was.

I do not think the people at the "Kaiserhof" and the many other hotels were concerned about a church. No one seemed to think of going to church on Sunday. The manager of the hotel, when we asked him, could only say that there was a church service somewhere, he thought, fortnightly or monthly. I am quite sure the man of the Judenhetze had a

Calvinistic service every Sunday and preached with fine cold zealot fury.

Anyhow, God could not be forgotten in the pine-woods, which, for miles and miles, made natural aisles and chancels. The pine-woods were beautiful and full of the singing of birds. I wrote there occasionally, but the pine-wood keeps the cold of the snows in her heart—and it was a cold Summer. Once while I worked there came running, like lusty young animals, the boys from the village school, in twos and threes. Half their number had passed in the impetuous rush before they discovered me. My watch was out of order, so I had a little clock by my side to tell me the time. Their curious interest was excited by me and my writing and the clock. They closed in about me, thirty or forty of them, big hefty lads of sixteen or thereabouts, like young ponies. It might have been alarming. They asked eager questions about the clock, which I could not answer. I could only smile and show them the clock, which they passed from hand to hand. They might well be surprised by a dumb woman sitting in the wood writing, a clock by her side. It sounds rather like a fairy-tale. I was not sure that I would have liked the adventure at home. But, after admiring the clock, they returned it to its place, and with a chorus of "*Guten Tag*" rushed after their fellows. I have said the Germans are a mannerly race. It would have been such an opportunity for hooliganism.

Those boys, with the post-card of the church,

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persuade me that Brunshaupten and Arendsee must have a life of their own, apart from the Summer visitors, despite the terrible wintriness of the Baltic as depicted on the post-cards ; but I could not find any trace of it. Everything seemed made for the Summer hotels. Even the pine-woods, remembering and waiting for the Winter, were dotted all over with seats, very convenient, but forbidding the idea of wolves even in the Winter. One would have liked to feel that the wolves came when Brunshaupten and Arendsee were empty and silent as the Arctic Ocean, but there was nothing nearer a wolf than the beautiful Schäfferhund of the proprietor of the "Kaiserhof," which he said was the best dog in Germany and practically priceless. I expect many other owners of Schäfferhunds were saying the same thing and believing it.

However, though the weather had broken and the skies were dark and cold, with heavy rain, the pine-wood, murmuring of the Winter, had many days to wait before the great Whiteness and Silence should come. The Summer visitors were not to be balked of their Summer pleasures. Still the bathing went on. Still the men walked about in yachting caps and wonderful blazers, flannels and canvas shoes : and still the beautifully tucked and veined lingerie dresses of the ladies, their transparent stockings and high-heeled white shoes, showed draggle-tailed under waterproofs. I was never really warm in those days except when I took a bath.

There were no baths in the Summer hotels—you were supposed to bathe in the sea—but there were bathing establishments at intervals along the front where all the world could take hot sea-baths when it chose. It was an interesting fact and indicative of German domesticity that the bathrooms were often double and sometimes there was a baby's bath in addition. When you went with a companion for a bath the Russian gentleman who was in charge always took it for granted that you required a double bathroom. It was a touching tribute to the intimacy of German family life.

But the real event of the day at Brunshaupten and Arendsee was the sea-bathing. You are not allowed to bathe as you will in the Baltic Sea. Some of us who essayed it were promptly arrested by the Green Police, about whom the *Daily Mail* used to make such a to-do. The Green Police were accompanied on that occasion by an immense police-dog, on a long lead that added a sound of the clanking of chains to the other terrors of the situation. I was not present at the arrest; I only became aware of it when the feminine member of the party rushed in in a wild flurry and bolted our bedroom door against the approach of the Green Police. We had not yet given up thinking the Germans formidable. She had barely time to tell me what had happened—with the picturesque addition that one male member of the party had held the police in argument, while a flying glance at the other had shown him as arranging

his hair with the aid of a small pocket-glass, his thoughts apparently miles away, with all the sangfroid of a Dublin Fusilier in the presence of the enemy—before the Green Police were knocking at the door. We heard the clank of the dog's chain and his uneasy movements while we lay low. Would they break in the door? Our hearts went pit-a-pat. The knocking was repeated, gently. Then we heard the deep German: "*Ach! . . . So! . . .*" The situation was too intricate for the Green Police. They retired, and the next we heard of the affair was that the bathers had been fined a hundred marks between them. Properly worked up the incident would have been a fine stunt for the *Daily Mail*, but we are conscientious journalists.

This penalising of the open sea was, we were assured, for the good of the visitor, since there were dangerous currents off-shore. We did not believe it. The real reason was that the official bathing establishments brought a little revenue to the place, and so the visitor must bathe there.

The Baden—Brunshaupten and Arendsee had each its Bad—were long white wooden structures at the edge of the sea. You went up the landward steps a fully clothed person: you went down the seaward ones a bather.

The Badenhausen were in three portions—the Herren-Baden, the Damen-Baden and the Familien-Baden. The Herren-Baden and the Damen-Baden may be dismissed in a word. The Herren-Baden

was for men who took their bathing seriously, as few Germans do: they like to bathe with their families as the French do, and play about in the surf. The Damen-Baden might have been the appendage of a Convent; a few ladies dipped there sadly, as a matter of duty. They were well-screened from the Herren-Baden at one side and the Familien-Baden at the other; and they had no spectators.

All the world went to the Familien-Baden and those who did not bathe looked on. The Germans sea-bathe with a voluptuousness. One young lady used to call it an orgy, but it was not that: it was too unconscious. It might have been wildly improper if the bathers had not been so thoroughly respectable that you felt they could do anything yet remain proper. The scene, when the sea was full of them, would have appealed irresistibly to the more brutal kind of artist, such as John Leech. (It was Leech—was it not?—who illustrated the Caudle Lectures.) The more sensitive lookers-on did not even feel inclined to laugh. It would be like laughing in the face of a large, well-intentioned child who had no idea that its antics might seem ridiculous to grown-ups. It would have been an unthinkable boorishness to laugh on the part of the strangers.

Any number of people beyond a single one seemed to constitute a Family within the meaning of the Act. There were Papa, Mamma and Baby, of course, and the children of all ages, and the grown-up sons and daughters, and there were also the fiancés and

the young lady with two or three swains to her bow. Under the *peignoir* of dazzling colours—colours that never were on sea or land—the men wore the *culotte* of the male bather all the world over, only broader and more violent in the stripes. The ladies wore, between the *peignoirs* and the bathing-dress proper, brilliant pyjamas of orange, emerald-green, vivid purple, magenta—all the colours in the German dyeing vat. I have seen a flirtatious young lady remove her pyjamas and fling a portion each to a couple of obvious adorers before entering the water. I am bound to say that flirtation does not sit well on the Germans. The sober, steadfast and demure becomes them better.

With the sea full of violent colours and the beach full of violent colours and the sun pouring down on the white sands, eleven o'clock at the Familien-Baden was something to "bid the rash gazer wipe the eye." No one at the Familien-Baden ever thought of swimming. They played the German equivalent of "Ring-a-ring-a-roses" or danced backwards and forwards in long lines, holding hands. It was all very well for the young and slim, but after early youth the German is apt to become bulky. I will pass over that aspect of the case and the bathers being photographed, half in, half out of the sea, all in hilarious mood and full of family jest. It was absurd, but then it was so unconscious; it was always innocent and thoroughly respectable. I have seen "orgies" at watering-places not Ger-

man which much better, or worse, deserved the name.

But with the bathing over the worst was to come. The bathers hung themselves out to dry on the beach. They believed in the sun's rays: they were very scantily clothed. But nobody seemed to mind, and it was very domestic. Papa lay with his head in Mamma's lap. I don't know what became of the lovers. At this stage of the proceedings the insular looker-on vanished.

A little later one was aware that all those hooded chairs on the beach were full of romantic couples. One trod warily, averting one's eyes from the love-making. Presently one discovered that the lovers were only Papa and Mamma. Their offspring were digging in the sands, or had gone off to hear the band. The "*Liebchen*" and other murmurs of endearment were from Papa to Mamma and from Mamma to Papa.

I have never seen young Germans in the act of making love; though their eyes and their glances show that they are keenly aware of a pretty girl, but not offensively so, as a Frenchman or an Italian may be and often is. The public unashamed love-making is for Papa and Mamma, and it has nothing to do with age or looks.

The German woman, resigning herself to be a *hausfrau*, is not often comely after youth is past, unlike her bright-eyed brisk island sister. Too much of life indoors, of kitchen cares, of central heating

and the stove, of beer perhaps and heavily spiced foods, rob her of her beauty untimely. But she is always the same to her husband. She is always his dearest companion. At Brunshaupten I have heard in the morning a man going off for the day call back endearments to his wife—"his dearest heart"—in a low impassioned whisper that was the call of the bird in the human heart. It reminded one of the epithets some of the great Elizabethans had for their ladies—the "*Sweete Cheeke*" and "*Sweete Lippes*" of certain prisoners in the Tower, of Chideock Tichborne and Walter Raleigh. After all, there is something noble in such fondnesses and an added appeal if the recipient be only lovely to the man who uses them.

I do not think any German would know that he had an ugly wife. The plain, heavy middle-aged woman, whose husband may retain his youth and good looks long after she has fallen into dreary middle-age, is only fretted with petty cares. She holds her husband securely. But it is the petty cares that age and corrode. The youngest-looking woman I have ever seen for her age watched incessantly over a blind husband. The most girlish, very delicate herself, held up a husband of moods, a houseful of ailing children and a scattered parish. Great cares beautify: little cares deface. But for the German husband apparently his Gretchen keeps always the composed and delicate beauty of her girlhood.

Brunshaupten and Arendsee were friendly. At

the Casino or the Kurhaus one was always meeting with waiters who had learnt their English in London or Dublin and were overjoyed to exchange reminiscences. There was the guileless man who procured you your *Times* and sold you your *Daily Mail* with a satisfaction in giving you the thing you desired which added graciousness to your purchasing. You felt horribly guilty as he handed you your *Daily Mail* with "Germany Shamming Dead," and "Make Them Pay!" in capitals all across the front page. You met his confiding smile shamefacedly, and hoped he did not know what it was all about—but I expect he did.

There were lovely evenings despite the broken weather, and the little boats went by, dark on the shimmering silver sea, against skies of orange and pink and burnt umber. There were festival evenings when the whole world ate its dinner in the open and there were fireworks and coloured lights against the wide peace of the sky and sea; and all the children to the youngest baby came to the show, not omitting the family dog. Such occasions made one wonder why we do not have these simple enjoyments in our islands. We have not yet given over distrusting the night-sky and the night-air as our forebears did, no matter how beautiful and benign they be and how full of sweetness.

CHAPTER IX

WE FIND A FLAT

IT was our first journey quite on our own in Germany, the return journey from Brunshaupten, of which we had been a little alarmed, being without the language and outside the Occupation. All went perfectly well. We were taken in hand by benevolent German guards and porters, who pulled us out of trains against our will to make changes which were not in our railway-guide, and generally shepherded us till we got back to the world at Hamburg. There again a benevolent droshky driver took us in hand, driving us all round the town, and under the river, through the long electrically-lit subway to the further shore and back again. The river at Hamburg was crowded with shipping, and they were at work on new harbourage; everywhere the bustle of life and work, which has changed with the French adventure in the Ruhr to silence and idleness.

After dinner at the Hotel of the Four Seasons we had a night-journey from Hamburg to Cologne, and on that journey we had our first experience of the Prussian. I am glad to have had some few ex-

periences of this gentleman so that I know he exists. He did not in this case belong to the Jünker class. He, or they rather, were business men from Essen, that is to say, the German equivalent for Birmingham or the Five Towns or Belfast or Glasgow.

We arrived at the station at midnight to find that our seats were allotted us in a carriage which already contained three German men, all smoking huge cigars. Of course, the windows were shut tight; they commanded the windows. We kept the door open into the corridor in which there was a slit of window open.

At first, there was no friction, but they talked; how they talked! We had been travelling from early morning and were very tired. All the time while they chattered and laughed and poked each other in the ribs they smoked one cigar after another.

We did not object: we dozed in our corners while the talk and laughter went on. They talked till about half-past two. If we had said nothing the occasion might have passed without unpleasantness; but we grumbled between our uneasy dozing at their cigars, their wakefulness, the atmosphere, quite forgetting or perhaps being unaware that the men of Essen were pretty certain to be English-speakers. Indeed, the German business-man who was not was the exception.

I was thoroughly disgruntled and more than half-asleep when a benevolent old gentleman, who was evidently very dear to them, came along and, block-

ing the doorway of the carriage, engaged in a lively conversation across me. I sighed and groaned and grumbled. He put his hand on my shoulder and asked with kind concern if I was not well. My manners had quite gone by the board and I refused to answer, beyond grumbling that I wished he would go away. Perhaps he understood for he went with a scurry at last; and after that the unpleasantness began.

Pamela has always said that I brought it on myself by being so nasty to their "old love!" I am sure he was an old love, and I am sorry I was nasty to him. No sooner had he gone than one Prussian suggested that we should not have chosen their carriage if we objected to their smoke. We replied that our seats were given us there: he had spoken in perfect English. The second man, who was a thorough malignant, went out into the corridor, closed the window and proceeded to close the door: but there I came in. Pamela immediately opened the window in the corridor; then began the usual game of shutting and opening windows, which often enlivens the islanders' Grand Tour. There were two Prussians. The third man murmured pacifically that they *had* been smoking a great deal and suggested a compromise which the others would not listen to. The contention was very bitter; in the end the worst of the Prussians called in the guard who immediately overrode our rights by closing the corridor window.

Pamela was quite prepared to carry on the fight ; but as we had no backing in that completely German train, I succeeded in inducing her to put up with the atmosphere. After that the Prussians, sated with victory, went asleep.

It was an August night but sometime in the early morning someone opened a window further down the corridor and a cold mist came in. I am sure there was frost with it. I watched the rime forming on the moustache of my truly hateful neighbour—the worst Prussian of the two—as he slid over towards me in his uneasy sleep ; or I thought I saw rime. Anyhow, it was piercingly cold. I bore my own sufferings with joyful resignation.

We had had a glimpse of what the Prussian could be if he had the upper hand. Again, we experienced it on a train-journey to Luxembourg, when two Prussians, with second-class tickets, entered our first-class carriage and stepping across us without so much as “*Bitte!*” closed our ventilator. There was no provocation this time. The men simply hated us, and when we left the train we had to drag down our luggage from the rack over their heads and force our way out between knees that refused to make way for us.

This boorishness, however, was uncommon enough in Germany to stand out. When we told a very charming Luxembourg lady of this last experience, she said : “ Oh, but, ‘*les commerciaux Proissiens*’ : it is the word with *us* for all that is impossible.”

She went on to tell a story of the days after the '66 when a Prussian came to Luxembourg and visited the Cathedral. He noticed among the votive offerings at one of the shrines a golden mouse and asked its meaning. The guide explained that the town was once threatened with a plague of mice and the offering was laid there as an intercessory one.

"And did it banish the mice?" asked the Prussian innocently.

"No: if it had we should have placed there a golden *Proissien*."

However, even of three men of Essen one was a decent man; and there was the "old love" whom I had repelled who was doubtless very kindly. When the Essen men had departed in the chill early morning, we had two quite agreeable fellow-travellers who had never seen each other before but chattered like magpies. On the Luxembourg journey we were like long-lost beloveds to the officials. A policeman looked at our passports, with a kindling eye of joy and a delighted cry of "*Ach . . . Engländer!*" You would think he had been waiting for the *Engländer* all his life.

We had a homelike feeling coming back from the Baltic to the Hotel Kaiser Wilhelm, where every one took our return as a rare personal compliment. We came back to the churches and to the delightful shopping and all the gaiety of Cologne in Summer as though to long-lost friends.

The shopping was always an adventure. German

shoes, like German clothes, are impossible to the islander, but we had heard of a Meisterschuhmacher, one Peter Roggendorf, in the Friesenplatz, and him we went in search of. We were met by the Meisterschuhmacher himself, who might have been Hans Sachs. He had a very small bird-like head and face, ruddy-coloured, a-top of a long body, and a twinkling eye of humour. He received us in a room which had no sign of his craft except for the fact that the handsome polished wood cupboard was filled with shoes and materials for shoes instead of books or china; and there was a prevailing smell of leather. At that time we had, I think, only one word relative to the business in hand or on foot—which was “*schön*.” We managed very well on that word, eked out by pantomimic gestures and the smattering of French of the tall son wearing his old army tunic and trousers under the apron of his trade. He had the same bird-like face, only it was pale, and a shock of fair hair flung backward. He might have sat for the angel in Rossetti’s “Annunciation.”

Anything less like the commercial business of getting a pair of shoes I cannot imagine. There was a dignity about the proceeding. Various beautiful fabrics were produced—antelope and suede and snakeskin, in greys and browns and blue and purple and green, gold and silver cloth, deep thick velvets. The measuring of your foot might have taken place in Hans Sachs’s shop in Nürnberg, a

few hundred years ago. The Meisterschuhmacher never lost his wise, humorous appreciation of us, impossible people; in Germany, without a word of German! The young Meisterschuhmacher was also a Meistersinger, I am sure. With that face he must be of the choir. He was very grave and very gentle.

We made our arrangements for the shoes. Mine of grey antelope were, according to the rate of exchange, about fifteen shillings that day. When I came to pay for them—the messenger had been told to leave the shoes but not to ask to see the ladies—they were about twelve shillings. The Meisterschuhmacher made no attempt to guard himself against the fluctuations of the mark.

The lady through whom we had found him had told us that when she came to pay him in similar circumstances she wished to increase the price to the same sum in English money which she would have paid when she gave the order. He refused, saying that he had had the advantage of the fall in the mark since labour was cheaper.

“Whose shoes shall be made first?” he asked, on a later visit.

“Mine,” said Pamela, who was in a hurry.

“Youth must be served,” he said; and then, as I turned to go out of the room, he laid a hand on my shoulder. It was as though to console me because I was not young. Imagine an English shoemaker doing that!

Shopping was sometimes an embarrassment from the interest manifested in your buying by a shop-walker or the male proprietor, a bland and child-like interest. I have bought garments of a certain intimacy while a German man, elderly or middle-aged, looked on with a childlike smile. I have punctuated my purchasing with urgent asides of "Oh, do go away, man!" but he never went.

I had refused to learn German at my age and have frequently suffered from the attempts of Germans to draw me into conversation. No use looking at the opposite wall with a blank air! If you will not talk they will, with an occasional pause as though they expected you to say something, and then the chatter begins again, the slow, steady, irresistible flood of talk.

A month after our return from Brunshaupten Pamela decided that since we had given up the Tyrol a flat would be necessary against the Winter. I was quite happy at the "Kaiser Wilhelm": the constant looking on at the people in the restaurant seemed to agree with me: I had not a nerve by this time, or was unconscious of one, although I am usually a nervy person.

However, a reminder of what the central heating would be in Winter made me acknowledge that Pamela had reason. We had not yet got at the German house-agents, though the Army of Occupation thought that there was no reason why they should not exist. We tried first advertising in the

German papers, getting the assistance of an interpreter to word the advertisements, but, when we got the answers, no interpreter being at hand, we could not read them. Then an advertisement appeared in the *Cologne Post*, the two-sheet newspaper of the British Occupation: someone required one distinguished English gentleman to share a flat.

Now it was quite impossible for us to assume the part of one distinguished English gentleman, but we had the brilliant idea that if we could get at the German owner of the flat we should find out if there was any such thing as a German house-agent. We had seen no sign of such a person in our many perambulations.

The male member of the party refused to take part in the expedition. Only my extreme amiability brought me into it. Had not a high officer of the British Army of the Rhine assured us that we should never get a flat; while a less highly-placed but more useful one to us had said that, of course, he would find a flat for us before the Winter, but that he had people on his list unsatisfied ever since the Occupation began. Therefore I felt very pessimistic, and while I was quite well aware that a bedroom at the Hotel Kaiser Wilhelm was not the best place in the world for a literary mother and daughter to work together all the Winter, the torpidity of Cologne was upon me and I did not want to stir.

There is something about Cologne that makes you resigned to whatever happens. *Contretemps* that would make you tear the hair in any other place in the world leave you smiling. Of course I did not yet know how impossible the restaurant of the "Kaiser Wilhelm" was going to be when the central heating was on and the windows shut.

However, being amiable, and under the influence of Cologne, I went where I was bidden. We were still rather afraid of penetrating a German dwelling, but, of course, I had to stand by my daughter; I could not let her go alone.

We went up the marble steps between the marble walls of the flat dwelling. One always lives in marble halls in Cologne: I suppose marble is very cheap. We had made up our minds that an irascible German gentleman craved the society of a distinguished English gentleman, and we were prepared when we knocked at the door to meet with a stormy reception. In fact, after we had rung the bell we *almost* ran away.

However, the owner of the flat proved to be a very sad-looking, youngish widow-lady whose husband had been killed in the War. We had not yet got over thinking that such people must hate us. She knew enough English for us to unfold our tale, and although she might have been justifiably annoyed at our answering an advertisement directed to a distinguished English gentleman, she was nevertheless most helpful. We left her in a glow of good

feeling, with the address of the *Schlüsselburo*—i.e. Key-bureau, house-agent, in our pocket.

At the *Schlüsselburo* we were at once caught into the immense amiability and the equally immense leisureliness of Rhineland business life. Pamela had armed herself with the German for "furnished flat"; beyond that she could not go. The young man who received us when it came to our turn had not a word of English. However, there is never a deadlock in the Rhineland. A lady who had concluded her business turned back and interpreted.

To our stupefaction we found that the *Schlüsselburo* had a flat of seven rooms, a balcony flat—would that be too much for us? We thought it a little large, and the house-agent was not depressed. Would we consider a most elegant flat? We were quite prepared to consider it. Then would we come back at two o'clock and inspect?

We came back at two o'clock to find our young man just going out to inspect with somebody else. He set chairs for us: another chance interpreter assured us for him that he would be back immediately. After three-quarters of an hour had passed without his return we were just going when he appeared, evidently quite unconscious that the delay meant anything to us. Had we not had chairs in a nice cool office while the sun blazed outside?

He rushed us to the most elegant flat at a great pace—it was one of the few hot days of the full Summer of 1922. We were not impressed by it,

and we were rather compunctious at having taken up his time—he was apparently one of the partners on the business. We left him listening to what seemed an interminable statement of the ailments of the elderly lady with the moustache, whose daughter was showing us round. We hastened the inspection, the more that we had known from our first entry that we should not take the flat. We said we should call again in the deceiving way of the tentative tenant. Have I not suffered at his or her hands?

We found our friend from the *Schlüsselburo* apparently so absorbed in the old lady's narrative that he could not be detached, so we went without him. We were nearly home when he overtook us with, "*Ach . . . So . . . !*" He was not at all depressed because the elegant flat had not pleased us.

Again we had an inspection. The young man from the *Schlüsselburo* had a way of running after casual strangers in the streets and demanding if they knew English, persisting till he found one who did and pressing him into the service.

He only said, "*Ach . . . So !*" when it was explained that we did not like another most elegant flat. To-morrow morning, at eleven o'clock, he would produce a third one.

He did. Apparently he had an inexhaustible supply of flats to produce. There was just the one difficulty—the *Wohnungsamt*. I thought the *Wohn-*

ungsamt was some terrible secret power which held flat-owners desirous of letting in thrall and devoured house-agents lest they should aid and abet them.

Day after day, at eleven o'clock, there was a new flat-owner to interview us. They all came. They all said "*Ach . . . So!*" when they heard that we had not got the consent of the *Wohnungsamt* without which, apparently, the bargain was off. But they continued to come, new flat-owners every day. When I mention that all or most of the casual interpreters came also, with daily additions to their number, it will be understood that the *Schlüsselburo* had become slightly congested. We became aware in time that the *Wohnungsamt* was the German billeting committee. Because of the house-shortage in this teeming Germany—it seems incredible with the myriads of flats and the houses going up everywhere—no one is allowed to have more rooms than he or she or the family need for use. If you have a spare room the *Wohnungsamt* sweeps down on you and some one is billeted. The *Wohnungsamt* is the natural enemy of the *Schlüsselburo*.

One of the voluntary interpreters who had been in England before the War, mentioned that in those happy days he had been engaged in finance: he was now in Fine Arts. Fine Arts apparently gave heaps of leisure as an occupation, since this young man was prepared to accompany us morning after morning in our search for the flat. There was no

question of fee or reward; he was one of those casual interpreters whom the young man of the *Schlüsselburo* had run after in the street with a wild hope that he might speak English, so that the negotiations might proceed.

The willing service of all these kindly people came to a happy ending on the fifth morning. There was a new flat-owner, a lady with a delicate, sensitive face which still possessed a beauty of colour and line and a great gentleness.

When we arrived that morning the packed room at the *Schlüsselburo* breathed, as it were, one composite sigh of relief.

"There is a lady here," said the interpreter, "of a most beautiful flat. *Wunderschön* for central life! Hansa Ring. So nice for you. She speaks English."

"*Ach . . . So . . . !*" sighed the crowd; and there was an echo: "So nice for you. She speaks English."

The lady had a flat which had been requisitioned by the English and had not been de-requisitioned, so the *Wohnungsamt* had no terrors for her.

It was a moving that was not long a-doing. We possessed that so wonderful flat for central life for many months. There was complete peace there apart from the appalling noises of the Outer Cologne Railway Station. It is something too to be remembered with retrospective happiness.

The fee to the *Schlüsselburo* was in our money at

that time fifteen shillings. When we paid the other partner he showed deep gratitude. We mentioned the payment to our Frau, and she remarked: "They must have been pleased: they could not have expected it."

Cryptic that!—for it was a bargain. I have always suspected some remote conjunction of thought with the *Wohnungsamt*.

CHAPTER X

VICTOR AND VANQUISHED

PERHAPS the attitude of the Rhinelander towards us was explained in a remark of our Frau at a time when it was rumoured that the British were about to evacuate the Rhineland, leaving it to the French. "Cologne would be a very unhappy town," she said.

The British Occupation must have had its best chance of being popular in the fact that it was side by side with the French. The French, I should say, never at all touched with the Germans. They are good haters and they had reason to hate. There must be a constant exacerbation of bitterness in the contrast between the smiling Rhineland and the French devastated territory. Perhaps if England had been invaded she would not have found it so easy to forgive. The French soldiers walked through the streets of the Rhenish towns—stalked, one might say—with an austere aloofness. They never forgot that they were victors—and at what a price! Whereas the English have made their own of Cologne in the way they have of carrying England with them wherever they go. There is a whole page of the

Cologne Post taken up every day with their sporting events. Their soldiers, being very well-paid, scatter money lavishly. The rank and file fraternise. They marry German girls, or they walk out with them. It is curious in the German restaurants to see the Tommies with their German wives or sweethearts having a meal. No mere beer-drinking for Tommy. He does himself and his girl well. He drives in taxis; the N.C.O. frequently has a little motor-car of his own.

There was always this isolation of the French in the Occupied Areas. You saw them at British occasions of one kind or other, with their families or in groups, always austere and lonely. One suspected that their austere aloofness was part of their eternal protest against an easy forgiveness, the slack temperament as they would feel it, which finds it easy to forgive.

Yet it was a French officer who demurred at the propaganda.

"If you had said to them plainly," he wrote, "'We have conquered you and you have got to pay, as you would have made us pay if the positions were reversed,' they would have understood that. There would have been no bad blood. As it is, all over Germany, the intolerable assumption of an immense superiority rankles in the hearts of the young who have not yet experienced the horrors of War."

That was for the British. The French did not pretend to an immense superiority. The atrocities

campaign—the “Kultur,” the “Huns”—which were the bludgeons of a propaganda intended for the civilian, still festers in the proud and sensitive young. Propaganda is necessary perhaps, but it is a dirty weapon, as likely to hurt the one who uses it as the one against whom it is directed.

German culture is, at all events, in bad straits at present! That first Autumn I had occasion to consult a distinguished Cologne oculist; I had got grit in my eye. I went to his house and he came from his clinic to the consulting room where I waited. There was a long French window open on to a garden, with trees outside, and one had an impression of quiet freshness and greenness in the sunny room. The open window, I may remark, is seldom patronised by doctors at home. The distinguished oculist came in, a spare eager man, bearded, with kind intellectual eyes and a fine forehead: soft brown hair and a benignant expression. One would have known him anywhere for a *savant*.

He whisked out that grit more expeditiously and painlessly than I could have believed possible, displaying the tiny speck which had given so much trouble, on a bit of cotton wool with a naïve pride. He was very keen. As soon as he had heard I was from Dublin he produced two Irish friends—Sir Bertram Windle and Dr. Swanzy. The latter I did not know—the former I knew and loved. Dr. Jung was as excited as a child over this common friendship.

When I could open my eyes I discovered not only

Dr. Jung's attractive face but a general shabbiness in the big consulting-room, in the whole air of the place; in—dare I say it?—the doctor's clothes. I remembered the consulting-rooms at home. Every Dublin doctor is a collector and one waited and was treated in a room full of beautiful things. Here was my Lady Poverty, not with a beauty of bareness, but—shabby: at its best German furniture is apt to be tasteless.

One forgot that shabbiness for the great attractiveness of Dr. Jung. The kind, lined face and bright eyes laid hold on one's affections immediately.

His fee was three hundred marks—at the rate of exchange then one shilling and threepence! It was no wonder everything was shabby. We did not know whether we should offer him more than he asked. The Germans are sometimes very proud—so we waited to consult our Frau, who had acted as interpreter.

A few days later I had to go back to him. The eye had inflamed. He treated it and put on a bandage. When I returned to him at the appointed time the eye was practically well. I asked him what fee I should pay. We were without an interpreter on the second occasion. He said five hundred marks, i.e. one shilling and tenpence.

I produced a ten-thousand mark note. He had some difficulty in finding the change, which he put down in all manner of small notes—his fees presumably. When we were almost exhausted counting

we had a hasty consultation. We left two thousand marks on the table when he had left us alone, with a hundred-mark note which we had picked up from the floor, the ownership of which was in doubt. We asked him to take those thousand marks with what eloquence we could summon up; our Frau had not been encouraging about his accepting a larger fee than he asked. When he understood us he said: "For me!" with a childlike amazement and pleasure. "For me!"

I had a letter from him a little later—I had sent him a fee more in accordance with fees at home. He thanked me with dignity. I must understand that he was quite satisfied with the fee he had asked, though he accepted my kindness. But he was troubled about the hundred-mark note, which he was sure did not belong to him. He could not keep it, so, unless I claimed it, he should give it to the poor.

Indeed, as Sir Bertram Windle wrote later, there are very good Germans and Dr. Jung is among the elect.

When the bad times came and one knew that there was great poverty one longed to give, but was shy of wounding German pride. Once in a tram a very poor-looking boy had given me his seat; I put a hundred-mark note in his hand, not as a reward but because of good-will. To my embarrassment he would not take it; till a woman seated further down the tram, presumably his mother, called to him and he took it.

The children are so well and comfortably dressed that one is often held back from giving by the fear of offence. It is always the poor who have that fanatical pride. A more educated class recognises that there is no shame in the one who has not receiving from the one who has. But the children were very pale and they grew steadily paler. Of course, the Germans are not a rosy race; you very seldom see colour among them; but it is more than that with the children. They suffered in the blockade—some of them were born during it: they were born of mothers who lived on substitutes and they have been fed on substitutes. Even now in Cologne only a child under four is allowed a sternly-rationed measure of milk daily.¹ Naturally there was not much strength to stand against the cold and wet of the Winter days and the long hours of darkness.

There were short commons then for the children, the multitudes and multitudes of children in Cologne shorter commons later; but the workers did not suffer as the middle-classes did, for apart from there being no lack of employment, the factories gave a subsidy for each child, an enforced levy probably, and the maternity benefits are very large.

But the children grew paler and paler, though they kept high hearts. For fear of wounding pride one dropped one's mite into the baskets the little boys and girls carried in the trams, hoping they would

¹ In the Autumn of 1923, no child over eighteen months received the ration of milk.

think a fairy had dropped it there ; or an angel. One gave direct to the small children who straight-way become heroes and benefactors—almost crowned heads to their fellows. Once we found a delighted recipient in a little boy of about four. We did not know if he would recognise the note for money, but as he looked at it he screwed up his ridiculous little face and began to laugh. The peals of his delighted laughter followed us up the street and as we turned a corner we heard him still and bore the music in our hearts, as did Wordsworth the Highland Maid's.

There is a revolution in manners in the young Rhinelanders, rich and poor alike. The elderly men still sit in trams while women stand. I have seen a German woman of middle age give her seat to a man of the same age, and young girls frequently give their seats to middle-aged men. But the young men and the young girls and the little boys of the working-class have begun to learn the new gospel. I have been told that the Occupation in its lusty youthful days rejoiced in making German men in the trams give their seats to German women and were commended for that lesson by a German newspaper. There is no need now for such teaching among the young. The uniformed men of the Rhineland, such as tram conductors and railway officials and policemen, might hold classes in manners for the highest. Not always though. Away from the town a railway official will tyrannize over his own

class. It is a penal offence for a civilian unaccompanied by an officer to travel in the trains reserved for Allied officers. The German officials were apt to be very hectoring to their own people if they blundered into the sacred enclosure. I have been aware of a case in which a young British officer outside his own Occupation actually accepted responsibility for a frightened German girl who had entered his carriage accidentally and was being bullied by the police authorities.

To return to the attitude of the French and the incessant provocation of the beautifully-kept town, the well-clad people, the richly stocked shops, all the evidences of employment and industry, to say nothing of the huge families. The French must have felt that though they were the victors there was relatively not a hair of the German head touched, while so much of France is in ruins. Even in the worst loss of the War, speaking officially and not humanly, the Germans could afford to lose men; there are no obvious gaps.

The French, as a people, are entirely bounded by France. To-day if you are a soldier of the Allies in France you pass where you will. "*Vous avez battu pour la France!*" It is enough. It never occurs to them that you could have fought for anything else: their minds are bounded by France. The War is always sacred to them. A jest about it would be received with horror and repulsion. The school of English humour which centred about the War is an

inconceivable, a shameless, shameful levity to the French. The school of "Old Bill" and "Spud Tamson" and all the rest would be impossible in France. Of course, the British have not as they have, the devastated areas at their doors, and all around them; while the population of seventy million enemies, scarcely reduced in numbers by the War, lies there across an imaginary frontier-line, ever-watchful, threatening. The French build precariously, never knowing the day nor the hour when the Grey Death, a myriad strong, will again swarm over that imaginary line.

Again, in the Rhineland as all over Germany, houses were being built with a feverish rapidity; and yet there were not enough houses for the teeming population. Industry was booming. The little army of houses, pretty and gimcrack, which have sprung up for the housing of the Occupation, was so much saved from the fire. These were already allotted to the railway-men when the Occupation should come to an end. Employment prevents revolution. England pays her debts except to the unemployed; Germany pays her unemployed and lets the other debts go hang. From her point of view she was right. There were a good many unemployed ex-British officers in Cologne, growing more hopeless with every day that passed. They used to foregather with a sad comradeship. They avoided happier men. I am not sure that Germany was not right, from any point of view. She pays her debts of honour. Up to a few months

before she was crowding all her departments and creating new industries perpetually for those who would otherwise be her unemployed.

The German contrives to live on very much less than we do. German clerks, paid by the German Government, at G.H.Q., had in 1922 a salary of two pounds a month. Lately I heard an Army Chaplain tell how he had handed over a couple of pounds sent to him for a specific purpose to a young German priest whom he knew slightly. To his horror the young priest burst into tears. "It will keep my mother for six months," he said; "I have not known how to keep her from starving."

Taken in conjunction with this the strange thing is that in Cologne, and doubtless in other German towns, one shop in every three plies a luxury trade. I will leave out the eau-de-Cologne shops. Roughly one out of every three is a chocolate shop, a *friseur's*, or a flower-shop. Every girl in Cologne and most of the women patronise the *friseur*. You see manicured hands lying in the laps of the working-class women in the trams and all the heads are neatly waved and braided. It is one of the things that conceal poverty. You could have permanent hair wave, electric treatment for the hair and electric face-massage, with blue and violet rays, as well as shampoos and manicure and pedicure, at the *friseur's*: and I dare say that there is no street in Cologne too poor to possess its *friseur*. No good going to the *friseur* on a Saturday afternoon or any other time when the working-class

girl is free, unless you go to an exclusive *friseur*. You will have no chance of being attended to.

The explanation of these apparent incongruities is that the charges at the time I am writing of were incredibly small. Even to the foreigner hair wave or manicure cost at the time this was written a hundred and fifty marks—three-halfpence of our money—and the German working-girl prefers to spend it in that way rather than in another.

But the *friseurs'* shops, with their glittering windows, full of soaps and scents and manicure cases and all sorts of pretty things, and smelling sweetly as you pass by, might well have stunk in the nostrils of those awaiting their Reparations. There was in 1922-3 at least an appearance of wealth in Germany.

The flowers that supply Cologne are grown in great nursery gardens outside the city. What I said of the *friseurs'* shops is true of the florists': there is not a street in Cologne too poor to have its flower-shop. Lovely flowers they were in those dark days when this was written—roses and carnations as well as chrysanthemums; and before Christmas we were shown white lilac, with an assurance that there would be plenty to come. In the depth of Winter we used to pay twopence and threepence each for roses and carnations. The Germans paid less than we did.

I have sometimes wondered where the flowers went to besides the churches. A good many to the graves: the flower-shops do a roaring trade in wreaths; every Saturday and eve of a feast the

trams were crowded with people carrying flowers to the Sudfriedhof, the Nordfriedhof and other cemeteries.

There was a huge business in flowers done for All Souls, when the whole German population of Cologne was out decorating the graves and lighting little candles and lanterns over the dead, so that for one night of the year they should not lie in the dark. Only the rain and the wind came and blew out the lights and washed away the flowers.

Many of the flowers must be bought to decorate the rooms where the people dwell, poor and rich.

The restaurants used to be crowded with people drinking beer and listening to the good music, but they were seldom eating; they had then the best beer in the world at about halfpenny a mug and excellent music. The band at the "Bauer" in the Hohestrasse was reputed the best in Germany, and the band at the "Germanic," its neighbour *Bier-halle*, was not far behind. When you saw the lights and heard the music and saw the people enjoying themselves you suspected that the places must be run as an act of philanthropy—but, no. Music is cheap in Germany. In the Autumn of 1922 one of our circle took singing lessons from the Prima Donna of the Opera at a cost of six hundred marks a lesson—about sixpence of our money at that time. When she insisted on doubling the fee the Prima Donna wept. She could not believe in so much good fortune.

To return to the attitude of the French. They

remember the War as no one else remembers it. A young soldier who has been living in France tells me that at the same house were two grave-faced French officers, who looked men of forty so war-worn were they, although they were still in the early twenties. I have noticed in our own boys who served in the War that they have all hollow cheeks. These young men were the ideal soldiers. They took their soldiering as though they had received the accolade of the knight after vigil and prayer. When the young Allied officer left, his train being timed in the small hours of the morning, these two came to the station to see him off. When he thanked them they said: "We do not allow a comrade to go without a God-speed." The French alone keep it, the sacred comradeship.

The son of that French house had avoided serving in the Occupied French Area from sheer distaste for the Germans.

"It was wise," said one of the French officers. "If one goes there and stays long enough there is fraternisation. It comes to one that they are the same flesh and blood with us, those people."

Which saying goes to prove that the French soldier is not always as aloof as he looks.

The mind of the French citizen is entirely bounded by France. All their travellings are within French territory. What is there in the world that France cannot afford? Why should one travel outside her pleasant borders?

"You do not feel as these people do?" the young Allied officer asked of the French officers.

"No. We are men of the world."

One of them jerked a thumb over his shoulder in the direction of Germany.

"Those people there—they have the babies," he said, and at that he sighed.

But Monsieur and Madame have their minds made up on the question of the small families. France can support just so much of a population in decency. They will not take the chances like the improvident English. They will not burden France overmuch.

Meanwhile, over the imaginary frontier-line there are myriads and myriads of children—every day and night the number grows—for the next War?

CHAPTER XI

OUR LIFE IN THE GERMAN FLAT

I HAD written so far when I laid down my pen and put away what I had written for further knowledge. I had then been five months in the Rhineland, with that one visit to the Baltic Coast.

Taking the book up again after more than six months lived in a German house I recognise that the pause was necessary. These ten chapters required a good deal of revision.

The first night we slept in our flat I was in despair. It was impossible to sleep in such a place. One might as well take a bed in the Haupt Bahnhof. Worse than that! The Outer Cologne Station, i.e. the goods station, the scene of all the shuntings, lay under our window.

The Station went asleep at 2 a.m. and was up and doing at 4 a.m. I have never been on top of such screaming noises, but now I come to think of it I don't believe they kept us awake even that first night. The Station spangled the night for us with gaily coloured lights. The lights and the noises came to be companionable. When we went to the

Eifel at Easter I could not sleep because of the silence, in which the tiny, inexplicable noises of a house fast asleep were terrifying.

Our flat was very comfortable, spacious and lofty—well furnished in a heavy German way. We had lace-trimmed linen sheets and pillow-cases and silk eiderdowns, making up independent of the “balloons,” which we soon banished. Our flat was within a larger flat, so that we were never lonely while enjoying as much privacy as if we were self-contained. Our Frau’s family came and went in the larger flat outside—his five stepdaughters and her one beautiful little daughter of sixteen; the Maypole nephew from Friesland and the nephew on the other side who was also a Maypole and a Bonn student; he brought other Bonn students when he came. We had the security of all that cheerful company outside our *apartement* and peace within.

Madame—as I agreed to call her—spoke English excellently, a very bad thing for my chances of acquiring the German language. There was perfect ease of living for a busy woman. Madame did all our marketing and cooked our food, as far as possible in the English manner.

I do not know if German food before the War had the penetrating smell of German food of to-day. You never could get away from it. The flat and the staircase were saturated with it, even though one kept the open window in all weathers. They use

much more fat in their cooking than we do and substitute foods prevail.

After one has been in Cologne two or three months one discovers a loss of appetite and a general malaise which turns the world yellow. It is the hard water of Cologne, and perhaps also the situation of Cologne. For a month you loathe the food, and you are nauseated at most things. I can remember a time when the sight of the Luna Park, with its swing-boats and mountain slides and shooting galleries, was more than I could endure, even as seen from a tram. After the month you are acclimatised; yet so acknowledged a thing is this Cologne malady that girls working for the Rhineland High Commission were given their regular leaves which must be spent out of Germany.

The smell of the German cooking was about the last straw when one was still in the grip of the Cologne sickness. Long after I had grown acclimatised I smelt it motoring through Königsforst, and could hardly endure it. It was ever-present that smell. One smelt it in the clothes of the people in church, at the Opera, anywhere people were crowded together.

There used to be a libel on Cologne, that it had one scent and a hundred stinks. I found present-day Cologne a sweet-smelling town on the whole. Every time you passed the *friseur's* shop or the flower-shop, or met the wind that blows over the many gardens you got a very sweet whiff. Cleanliness prevails, except in the matter of baths. The smell of the food

is the one stink with which I am acquainted in Cologne. The rest is eau-de-Cologne, unless on a hot day when you may smell the human body.

Madame did what one woman might to save us from the smell of cooking; but if we had cookery without fat not so the rest of the family. I suppose, indeed, that the fat is substitute for meat.

We were in the throes of the Cologne sickness when we went to Luxembourg in November, 1922. We had French cookery there and were able to eat the food with only a slight nausea, but on the return journey, at Trier where we lunched, the smell of the German cookery came out to meet us as we approached the Hotel Pontenegro where we were to lunch and undid the good effects of Luxembourg.

There was evidence there of the French Occupation. The Hotel was occupied by French officers, and when we went in and sat down at a table there was a prodigious flutter on the part of the waiter to get us elsewhere—we had taken a table sacred to the French. There too at Trier Station the great central doorway was for the French. We, and the Germans, squeezed in humbly by a narrow entrance at the side.

At the flat I had missed at first the bustle and the crowded dining-room of the Hotel Kaiser Wilhelm, but the flat begun for me a Winter and Spring of such peace as can never be forgotten. When our one friend at that time was leaving Cologne, she wrote: "The Winter will not be long in passing."

Perhaps she knew the strange lulling tranquillity of Cologne in which Time goes like a sleep, in which cares and anxieties slip away from one like a garment, in which one opens a sleepy eye on the passing world only to close it again.

If the Occupation, the units of which are constantly changing, were not in Cologne I feel that I should never leave it. I would mean to go tomorrow, next week, next month, next year, but I would never go. One arrives at the virtue so much valued by the ascetic saints—detachment. Nothing matters. It is like St. Teresa's

"Let nothing disturb thee
Let nothing affright thee
All passes!
Only God remaineth for ever and ever."

When I read what I have said I am aware of a suggestion of the moss growing over me. As a matter of fact I worked during those months with an incredible ease and rapidity and joy in the working. Every time I sat down to work I was conscious of an inner warm pleasure in what I was going to do. Between July, 1922, and May, 1923, inclusive I wrote without effort and with sheer joy in the doing, three novels, a play, a book of "Memories" of dead friends, and the book that is under your eyes. I was doing constant journalism as well and short stories, verses—and writing a great many letters. I needed the evidence of all that work accomplished when I woke up to the fact that Winter was over and gone, and

that there was exquisite Spring and it was time to be shaking one's self wide-awake and making ready to go.

Very soon after our return from Luxembourg the Cologne sickness quite passed away, and one could again look at the Luna Park and contemplate the walking down certain streets clear-eyed and without loathing.

Now it is May and we are near going home and I can assert with safety that there was never a ripple on the water of the perfect placidity of life at the flat. Our Frau comes in and out. She is painfully anxious to please. If you send anything away from table she says with a heart-broken sigh: "Ah, was it not good?" She has long given up expecting from me any direction as to the food she shall give us. She does not approach me when I am writing since the early occasions when I looked at her with a bleak and wandering eye, and she fled like a frightened rabbit.

Sometimes when I am in the humour for talk and we talk she tells me about Friesland—she is a Friesian farmer's daughter. It is the nearest land to England and the cattle are beautiful and the forests. But it is cold, very cold and dark, and the earth is heavy and the people do not speak much. They have the coldness and the heaviness in their hearts, and they are tired of the incessant struggle against harsh Nature.

She told me how they used to go through the

forests with the snow heavy on the branches to church. She is still delicately pretty when she is dressed in her soft black and goes forth to visit her friends or to a concert at the Gurzenich or a play at the Schauspielhaus or to the Opera, which is very seldom. She is flower-like by the colourless and flaccid German women of her age.

But she looks frail, and one perceives that there is a spinal delicacy. She was the eldest daughter at the Friesian farm, and her father used to send her forth in all weathers to look after the sheep and cattle and even to work in the fields: and so she got this spinal trouble. Clear through her story you saw the stern, rigid life, the grey skies and the grey religion: the dour father who ruled by fear and not by love.

But there were glimpses of happier things. They read a great deal at the Friesian farm round the fire of Winter nights. The stories had a pastoral sound. Sometimes the Frau would tell me the plot of a story remembered over the years and she would wind up with a reflection that those days were better than these. Children were obedient to their parents then, and there was none of the craving for freedom there is now nor the rebellion against things as they are, and the young feared God.

The Frau, belonging to the middle-class, was an Imperialist, but the Kaiser's marriage seemed to have swept him from his throne with so many of his long-suffering subjects. His second marriage

made the War Lord ridiculous. The flight to Doorn and his safe sojourn there while Germany was broken and tortured had already shaken his empire in such hearts as hers. With his marriage it clean tumbled down.

One often wondered how she had gone from Friesland to Birmingham, where she lived eighteen years: how she had come back again and married the prosperous *Direktor* of a Cologne factory, whose prosperity had tumbled with the War even before he was stricken with a mortal disease. She had lived in a fine house at Nippes, overlooking the park, which is now the race-course of the British Army of the Rhine, where, in 1914, the flocks and herds for the provisioning of the Army had been gathered in. The nights, she said, had been noisy with the lowing and the bleating of the cattle. She and her husband had entertained officers of the High Command as people used to do at home and had opened their house to all who would come, little thinking of the time when she would let the best rooms of her flat to the English Occupation, and slave in their service.

The besetting sin of the German *Hausfrau* is surely her passion for cleaning. Cleanliness has its advantages, but they should not count against flesh and blood. The Rhineland *Hausfrau* even washes the front of her house as high as she can reach on Saturdays.

Our Frau was perpetually in trouble with domestics

who came only to go ; and that was the common lot of the German *Hausfrau*. It did not seem to occur to her that the burden of cleaning she laid upon herself would not be easily accepted by another.

The Frau spoke excellent English, but sometimes she dropped into the German idiom. On Fridays, when there was a fish dinner, she would suggest anxiously : " Always, Madame, Beer by Fish." It sounded like the genealogy of a race-horse, but it was only that she thought beer and fish went well together.

We grew very fond of our Frau and she of us. Then the French came into the Ruhr and the German young men went slaying them with their mouths, or their throats, night after night. There was talk of revolution, but she was insistent that nothing would ever happen to us. We used to say : " Will you protect us if there is a Revolution ? " She would answer, taking it very seriously : " No German would ever hurt a hair of your heads. There will be no Revolution, but if there was no one would hurt you. Everyone knows now the English lady who goes with her young daughter to St. Ursula's."

I may mention lest someone might say that I had changed my nationality, that it was no use saying " Irish " when the Germans said " English." I never found them very sympathetic with Ireland as she was during my time in the Rhineland. The French are naturally very much more sympathetic with the Irish. We were struck by the fact that very little

Irish news appeared in the German newspapers. We had to get the *Matin* for Irish news, and we were much struck by the fact that when Sir Henry Wilson, whom France regarded as one of her bulwarks, was shot, the comments in the French papers were on the act of "the Irish fanatics—no more than that."

The Germans are an entirely sane, sensible and orderly people. Like the English, they are not revolutionary. They leave that to the Celts and Latins. After a time we gave up amending "Irish" when a compliment was paid to us as "English": since no one took any notice. Pamela once embarrassed our Frau in the midst of her praise of the English by asking her if she had ever said "*Gott strafe England*" during the War. She got very pink and pretty, and laughed as she ran away.

The Rhinelanders in their readiness to laugh and their vivacity, which goes strangely side by side with stolidity, would seem to have a touch of the Latin, but perhaps it is that they have the childishness, the light-heartedness, the solemnity of children.

The Frau showed very little trace of the dourness of her native Friesland. She was always very ready to laugh at a jest. German humour as one discovered it on picture post-cards, the stage, in a comic Opera or at the Cabaret seemed to me rather of the knock-about order. But that perhaps was imposed on the Rhineland by Berlin; in nearly all essential ways they must have looked at things as differently as possible.

I remember, for instance, that the humour of the picture post-card was often concerned with old and fat people tumbling off of a seat or falling on a slide or some such mishap. I think I can remember something like it in Victorian England. I never saw any evidence in the Rhineland that such things moved to laughter. Once I stumbled getting into a tram and fell on my knees. I was not at all hurt. When I was helped to my feet I was surrounded by a ring of solemn German faces. One man held my hat, another my stick, a third my bag, and so on. No one laughed but an Englishman, or an Irishman perhaps, and his laughter was friendly and pleasant. I laughed with him at the absurd scene, but the German faces were immovably grave.

CHAPTER XII

LUXEMBOURG

IN November we went down to Luxembourg, where I had been asked to lecture to the English-Speaking Union of the Town and College of Luxembourg by a very energetic lady who had travelled all the way to Cologne for that purpose, and apparently thought nothing of making the journey. She even suggested that Pamela should visit Luxembourg once a month while she stayed in Cologne, in order to talk English to the classes.

So nearly as I can remember it took us eight hours to get to Luxembourg from Cologne. It was wretched weather, dark, foggy and raining, but we did manage to get our first glimpse of the exquisite Eifel country, so the fog must have lifted now and again. All that day the singing of the little pure rivers fed by many rivulets from the hills was in our ears between the noise and rattle of the train.

The Eifel begins about thirty miles from Cologne. It is a great stretch of mountainous country of volcanic origin, its superstructure rock from which the pastoral people wring a hard living. There is

no sign of poverty in the clean bright villages, but then Germany always hides her poverty ; and even on that dark and wet day the hills and streams, and the little villages perched high on the hillside around their church-towers, and the green valleys, had that peculiar brilliancy and cleanness of colour which gives Germany a new-washed look.

It was a long journey and the short Winter day was all but ended when we got to Luxembourg after a long but perfectly amiable hold-up at the frontier. The Germans are unacquainted with hustle. I imagine that if they were left to themselves and un-Prussianised, they would argue out any question involving a difference of opinion for as long a time as the Chinese—so that there need never be War.

Before we reached Luxembourg the skies had begun to break up. The tiny town of the tiny Grand Duchy gave us new-washed skies to see her by—skies of palest rose and green and pink and pearl.

That first evening we had the most gracious hospitality. After our reception at the station by various scholastic persons we were taken off for tea, which was hardly over before we had to get to our hotel and dress for dinner.

Awaiting us was a gracious, an urbane hospitality, in a house of that austere refinement and cultivation which one associates with the French Faubourg as one knows it in memoirs. Our hosts were not French ; they were of Luxembourg and the name

of Pescatore is written large on Luxembourg. Madame Pescatore had come to see me long ago with Mrs. Belloc Lowndes, and now she was receiving us into an unforgettable house and hospitality. They were very much of London, since Mr. Pescatore, who looked like a Velasquez, is Chargé d'Affaires (if that is the right word) to Great Britain and they had lived much in London.

It was a delightful thing to step from the street by a postern in a great wooden gate into the courtyard of the Pescatore house, to be greeted at the threshold by a beautiful big St. Bernard. The house inside had a bare air of refinement, and everything was precious, the pictures, the miniatures, the ivories, the Tanagra figures. There was something almost conventual about the atmosphere, so lofty was it. It was such a place as one felt must always be aloof from the grossnesses, the sins, the ignorances, the vulgarities of the world.

That night at the pretty and pleasant hotel we slept well, despite the bubbling of the central heating which was done by steam. We slept as far as possible in the open air. We could have quite easily shaken hands with our neighbours across the street if their windows had been as wide open as ours. We awoke in the morning to a bright sun, a blue sky and a miraculous atmosphere of Summer, so much so that we discarded some of our wraps before going out to be shown the town by the Head of the Luxembourg College, that wonderful place, where

French, German and English are taught simultaneously and you receive the most excellent education at the lowest possible price. Little places like Luxembourg have time for the things that really matter.

Alas, the Summer in Winter's lap was a delusion ; it was only the steam-heating, and in the streets the wind was from the North-West and keen ; but the North-West makes for colour. I wonder what would have happened to us if we had not had open windows. I am perfectly certain we should have been boiled alive.

Luxembourg is a lamb and a lady, a dear child of a town. She lies wonderfully in the lap of the hills. She is flooded with light. Her industry is hidden away in the hills. It is iron smelting, but you never suspect her of an industry. She is like a little town of the Middle Ages with a composite beautiful and placid life of its own—such a town as embraces the homes and the people as the family embraces the child.

The gas-lit town put one back thirty years at least, before man had learnt to harness the lightning. You could see all her twinkling lights as once we saw them in Dublin and London, only so much more clearly, for, as the learned Luxembourgian who was our guide summed up Luxembourg, " You can see through the town."

That is why there is so little traffic. Luxembourg has many wealthy citizens. They have beautiful

houses hidden behind a grim exterior. They live with a refinement which gives social intercourse a spiritual air. But they do not keep motor-cars, or they do not use them.

There is one little line of trams in Luxembourg; but unless you are in a violent hurry you walk. Every place you want to go to is near enough for you to walk; you go out to dinner in your evening shoes; and you walk invariably in the middle of the road.

Luxembourg has a territory of 40 miles long and perhaps 16 across. She is shaped like a shoe. She has a population of 210,000 all told, and she has only one town, the population of which is about 30,000. She has an army of 250, which is very much in evidence since it bugles all day long. You lie down to a bugle call, and you awake to one. A permanent peace-time army like that must bugle to show you it is there.

She has a Cathedral, and a resident Archduchess and her Consort and children, with a modest little palace looking on to the street. She has an administrative Government, the members of which are approachable by quite humble people, because all the citizens of Luxembourg have been to school together and know each other, like the citizens of a little mediæval town.

We were introduced to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Education and a third Minister by a lady who had tried to teach them English at an

early age. She was a very talkative lady and she held the floor. The Ministers acknowledged that so far as her English tuition was concerned they were bad boys. I had never imagined such merry and human Ministers. It was an infectious gay occasion, from which we went away quite radiant.

The approach to the Grand Duchess (25 years old) would have been almost equally easy if there had not been a question of health involved. She and her consort live a very simple life, practising the simple virtues. The Prince, for example, will pick up a tramping man by the roadside and give him a lift in his motor-car. Poor little young Royalties! They should have belonged to the Middle Ages, when they might have lived out their harmless lives without being caught into the statecraft of Europe.

Long ago, when we thought of sending our boys to school at the Grand Duché for the languages, some quite simple but learned person offered us an introduction to the then Grand Duchess. She was Marie Adelaide, who retired into a Convent, abdicating in favour of her sister, during the War. One had to be at Luxembourg to realise how it was that quite simple writing people should be offered an introduction to the Grand Duchess by a quite simple schoolmaster person.

There was a little incident when we talked with the Ministers that was significant of the general simplicity of life. A beautiful agate table had been

split across by a violent blow from the fist of a Socialist deputy who was making an energetic speech when he came as one of a deputation that wanted something or other done. I gathered—not from the Ministers—that the table remained broken, as he had left it, by way of making him ashamed of himself. He must have been a lamb of a Socialist if he had so much capacity for shame. To be sure Luxembourg is so little, and so truly democratic, despite the Palace, that all her children must feel that she belongs to them and be equally careful of her amenities and dignities.

After we had parted with the laughing Ministers in a great glow of happiness and good-fellowship, our academic lady wanted to take us to see the Ministers' wives. But we were due at our dear new friends, the Pescatores, for tea and my watch pointed to 4.30., or I thought it did. I must have been more tired than I knew from my travelling of the preceding day.

The maid looked oddly at us when we arrived and we found an empty drawing-room except for the St. Bernard. The house was very silent with the unmistakable feeling of a house where you arrive to be told, if it is London, that the mistress is "laying down!"

We looked at each other. There was a tea-table set indeed, but as yet coldly, with only beautiful china and silver. Then our glances fell on a clock on the chimney-piece. It was 3.30 o'clock.

We had a hasty consultation. Then we stole away quietly down the stairs, unobserved except by the St. Bernard. When we came back at the proper hour we were abashed at finding the maid at the postern looking wildly up and down the street, the St. Bernard out on the pathway also looking, apparently for us. We could not even explain to the maid, who spoke the mixed French and Belgian patois of the simple Luxembourger.

I think if we had told Madame Pescatore that we had not come before she would have believed us, but we could not let down the maid like that. She had been very sure that she had really admitted us to the drawing-room, till slow doubt crept into her confidence after she had failed to find us hidden behind a screen or under a table or sofa. Only for our conscientiousness we could have brazened it out and said we had never come.

From the hilarity the incident caused I recommend such a course of action to people who are not certain that they are going to be social successes.

The lecture went off very pleasantly, with many bouquets and much gracious kindness from a very responsive audience, and the next morning we left Luxembourg for another eight hours' journey to Cologne, feeling that we had been away a long time and had had a very good change.

We travelled with a very charming lady. She had the *chic* of the Frenchwoman visible as she came into the railway carriage. Her husband settled

her luggage in the rack ; it included a comfortable wide basket covered with waterproof. When he had settled her in he went outside. It was near the starting time : and we heard him read aloud from a German newspaper the first news of the English elections.

A little later we were learning from her how the War came to Luxembourg.

We had had pointed out to us by our professor the plateau where the Germans first appeared. Her house was just across the valley with the little river and the old houses and the church below in a gorge. At six in the morning of August 2nd, 1914, our lady and her husband awoke to a strange commotion and terror. He lifted the blind. There had been rumours of War, but nothing definite had reached Luxembourg. On the plateau facing the windows were running figures in the field-grey uniform.

"It is a Hunters' regiment that comes," he said. They had no idea of what those grey shapes in the morning light stood for.

The Prime Minister of Luxembourg, hastily awakened, met the first-comers at the bridge of many arches which spans the river. He held his revolver at the breast of the first man who came.

"You shall not pass," he said. "In the name of the Independent Grand Duchy of Luxembourg I bid you to go back."

They passed him like the waves of the sea, shaken with grim laughter. All that day they were going

through and the next day and the next—an endless river of grey figures, as irresistible as the sea or a great river in flood.

Then came the Occupation. Luxembourg was occupied all the years of the War, with galling restrictions and tyrannies for a free people. The Kaiser was there for quite a long time. We had seen the house he inhabited, not far from the barracks of the Luxembourg army of 250 men. There was a French Occupation of Luxembourg when we were there which was immensely popular. The Luxembourg people have a natural affinity with the French, as our elegant fellow-traveller showed.

She had meanwhile taken off her long fur-coat and wrapped up her head in a gauze veil as only a Frenchwoman can do it. From her smooth head to her silk stockings and suede shoes she was *chic* and a delight to the eyes.

She laughed, remembering an incident which had frightened her badly at the time. It synchronised with our knowledge of the curious childishness in the German character. She was travelling with a passport which served for her husband and herself and contained photographs of both. At the frontier a typical Junker officer examined both photographs, turning from one to the other and frowning immensely. She quaked: what was going to happen to her? After a time, which seemed an eternity to her, he handed her back the passport.

“Now,” he said with a naive satisfaction, “I

know who the man is who was in the Irish baths with me on Saturday night."

The "Irish" baths were the Turkish baths, first introduced into Western Europe by Dr. Barter of Cork. The baths must have reached Luxembourg by way of Cork—hence "Irish" baths.

We parted with our delightful companion at Cologne. She was going Northward to Hamburg, and the big basket that accompanied her contained butter, eggs and fowls for a household to which such things were even then prohibitive luxuries.

CHAPTER XIII

THE SLUMP IN THE MARK

ALL through that Autumn and Winter of 1922-23 whenever we felt hipped we went out and bought something. It was a relaxation limited at home, unlimited in the Rhineland.

I often thought that the fluctuation of the mark must have been more demoralising for the foreigners than for the Germans. English-speaking people in Cologne ate, drank, slept and dreamt the mark. Some of them were unblushingly selfish and greedy. Their rejoicings when the mark slumped were open and unashamed. They talked with sparkling eyes and a heightened colour in the banks, the streets, the shops, the restaurant, any public place, with Germans standing around gazing at them with large childlike eyes.

I am aware that to be perfectly high-minded and to take advantage of the fall in the mark were inconsistent. One had one's poor scruple about rejoicing, at least, openly, but one must confess to a delight in acquiring things which, at home, would have been out of one's reach. Before some of us

were done with the cheapness we had to emulate Polycrates and give away the most beloved thing of our bargains to save our souls. It was demoralising. One made the surprising discovery that it was very hard indeed to save our souls at that price.

It came to be a keen hard game between buyer and seller. When there was a sudden slump in the mark we rushed to buy before the shopkeepers had time to discover the slump and change the tickets. By order of the British High Commission goods in the shop-windows must have their prices marked. Sometimes, in a bad slump the shops shut hurriedly in the faces of the harpy customers while they changed the tickets. Monday was always a bad day to buy with a falling mark, because all day Sunday was given up to changing the tickets. The axiom in Cologne was: "If you see a thing you really want to buy, buy as soon as the mark falls."

I think we all became more or less financial experts, yet I can remember mothers of families who did not know how to fill in a cheque; they belonged to the simpler days. The prayer we should all have said daily in Cologne was, "Lord, keep me from greed!" Cologne, I think, must have retained in large measure the simple virtues of old Germany. It was still a very honest town. Many of the shops were very slow to put up prices. Once only, I think, did I have a shrewd turn done to me by a shopkeeper,

and our Frau, being told of it, said : " Ah, it was not so in the old shop : these are new people." It was probably a remnant of the simplicity that those who put up their prices made them altogether prohibitive. They did not know what to ask ; and while the mark for several weeks was stabilised at 98,000, the shops were empty. London prices were charged for clothes in the best shops—and, oh, as far as clothes went, you never could make German clothes anything but German clothes ! There was always something terribly wrong with them. The men of the Occupation eschewed German clothes, but the women succumbed in only too great numbers. Wherefore Cologne was the worst-dressed town in Europe ; and when the Americans came into it in the Summer months, they shone like the lilies of the field.

German dress is like German cookery or its smell : it nauseates. The impossible colours can be worn by children, or the often exquisite young girls : they cannot hurt them. But on older women they make a nightmare of the streets. One might imagine fancifully that a French fairy had dropped something evil into the German dye-vats. It would be a strange thing if, now that the French have seized the Ruhr dye-works, they were to change the colours and so hugely benefit the German race.

German taste, apart from music and gardens, is not good. A beautiful *lingerie* frock, tucked and veined to the last degree of exquisiteness, will have

woollen ornaments apparently borrowed from the antimacassars of old sprinkled upon it : and *lingerie* encrusted with wonderful embroidery will be made by machinery. One of us bringing a hand-made garment to be embroidered was asked by the embroideress if she should not replace the hand-sewing by machine-sewing.

This tastelessness is perhaps modern in Germany. It appears terribly in some restorations. There is the Minoritenkirche, which is used as a Garrison Church for the Catholic soldiers of the Rhine Army. Duns Scotus is buried there. Within it is all hard grey stone, with niggling little loops of gilding zig-zagging round all the arches. I could not reconcile these things with the beautiful old arches and windows and other features of the church till I discovered that it had been restored in comparatively recent times by a munificent citizen of Cologne.

But to return to the buying and selling. Let me say that on the whole the British Occupation must have done a lot to save Cologne from starving in those tragic days. German wages were incredibly low. Even a British skinflint would not offer a maid the wages paid in German households. Wages may be very low to the foreigner according to the exchange and very munificent to the German recipient. To give an example : with the exchange at 98,000 I paid a German day-maid 2000 marks a day, with her food, while the German *pension* paid 5000 a month to its housemaid, 8000 to its cook.

Rents in the same way as fixed by the *Wohnungsamt* were incredibly low, wherefore it is the desire of the German who has a flat or a house to let to have it requisitioned by the British Military Authorities, and then de-requisitioned on condition that it is to be requisitioned at need.

Our flat was a requisitioned flat. Our Frau was still paying 10,000 marks a year for it when I was paying her 40,000,000,000 a week for three rooms of it.

Most Britishers tipped extravagantly according to German ideas. It was one of the joys of Cologne to be able to bring a flush of joy to the cheek, tears to the eyes of your manicurist or a messenger by a tip which was nothing to you but a great sum to them.

There was a period when the carrying about of marks was becoming a difficult matter: one required such an enormous number of them. Later the Reichsbank obviated the difficulty by the issue of large notes. At a time when nothing counted to the British mind under the 5000-mark note, the mark note was still being printed, and 5 and 10 and 15 and 20 and 50 and 100 mark notes, so I suppose someone had some use for them. We were fast arriving at the point of the British in Austria, who used to go round the corner from the bank to throw away kronen.

One wonders what became of all the long wallets that were in the leather shops for the purpose of

carrying the notes. They disappeared from the windows with the coming of the 100,000 mark note, and as time went by the notes were printed for higher and higher values, so that you could carry milliards inside your glove, and the only trouble was to change the notes.

Those days of the innumerable marks, humorous stories were current. One was of a man who brought a suit-case into a restaurant and was told luggage was not allowed. "But that is only my purse," he said. I can remember a time when it took me an hour and a half to pay my weekly bill in 20,000 mark notes, which were all one could get at the time.

One of the eternal mysteries to the Britisher was how the people contrived to live on their low wages. Food prices went up steadily week after week, while the mark remained stationary at 98,000. The Germans are always tidily and comfortably dressed. Now if I bought at that time, let us say, a *voile* blouse, I should pay 60,000 marks for it at least. How then was a maid who received 5000 marks a month to dress herself. If she paid as we pay, a year's wages would buy her a single blouse.

It was the same with the food. Our food cost us something like 150,000 a week with the mark at 260,000. Even apart from the fact that we used the real article, where German food was largely substitute, how could the Germans live—how could a German *pension* keep its patrons for 80,000 marks a week, which covered service and light and, of course, rent?

The explanation must have been that there were two prices, one for the Occupation, one for the Germans, though I never found the German, however candid, who would admit it.

My Frau used to come in, horror-stricken, holding up her hands. "One little egg 550 mark!" she would cry with eyes towards heaven. "One pound of butter 10,000 mark; one pound of veal 14,000! What is to become of us?"

The egg to us was well under a penny, the butter under a shilling, the meat a little over it; but to the Germans the mark was still the mark, as the shilling is still the shilling to us when it is only worth fourpence: but if they paid as we paid it would be impossible.

Apart from the fluctuations of the mark, which made us all gamblers and covetous gamblers at heart, there was a pleasanter, wholesomer aspect of being able to go out and buy something when you felt hipped. A good deal of the shopping in Cologne was a happy adventure. There was a human contact with the people very difficult to arrive at in English shops. Of course, it was much easier for us to arrive at it, being Irish; and our English friends were sometimes scandalised by our ways.

A visit to Mr. Roggendorf was always a pleasure. There was a day when Pamela, bidden to a dance, must have silver shoes. There was no time for new ones, and the beautiful thick silver tissue which Mr. Roggendorf uses like an artist had not arrived

from Brussels. She went off and bought the best she could get, but it was only a base substitute. Tremblingly she took it and the shoes which were to be covered to Mr. Roggendorf. Mr. Roggendorf, like an artist, likes his leisure ; every German does, for the matter of that.

When she began to break the thing to Mr. Roggendorf—it was not so easy—she had small hope. At the sight of the substitute his eyes blazed “ *Schwindel !* ” he roared tremendously and flung the stuff from him to the other side of the room.

Down went the young lady on her knees, her hands uplifted, with an imploring “ *Bitte !* ” Mr. Roggendorf looked down at her ; a twinkle grew in his eye : he laughed as he lifted her up. Then, with a prodigious but benevolent growling he picked up the *Schwindel* and spread it upon the shoes it was proposed to cover.

There was another struggle after so much had been gained. It seemed quite impossible to make Mr. Roggendorf understand that the shoes were wanted for the next night. As I have said, he likes his leisure. At last he understood. After another fearful outburst of growling he drove us before him to the door. His son in his old army tunic, looking like the Angel Gabriel in a stained-glass window, had smiled coolly through all the violence. He nodded to us reassuringly as we were driven forth by Mr. Roggendorf snorting. The shoes were delivered before the young lady had time for fear.

It was an artistic pleasure to get your shoes from Mr. Roggendorf. You were put caressingly into a chair, while the fine skins and thick silks that look like a skin, and deep velvets were brought for your inspection. Mr. Roggendorf fingers his stuffs with delight. You must take them to the window and examine and finger them too. They were beautiful skins, well worth the fingering. You simply had to have shoes of them all. You might buy such shoes in a very few exclusive shops in London, but the price would be well out of reach of your purse.

We had shoes of all the colours and white buckskin, protesting meanwhile that Mr. Roggendorf would be the ruin of us, at which he roared with laughter.

Mr. Roggendorf will never press for payment. It is beneath his dignity as a *Meisterschumacher*. If you were a shameless person you might quite easily do Mr. Roggendorf by postponing paying him till an acute fall in the mark, but evidently he is accustomed to persons who are not shameless, since he is so trusting.

There were moments when he was not so urbane, which is to say that he was human. You bring him back a shoe for some slight alteration. The "tongue" is not high enough to cover the elastic underneath it. Mr. Roggendorf knows quite well that you are right; perhaps the artist in him is wounded by his own lapse for he protests vigorously that nothing can be done, that no reasonable woman could object to a little *gummi* showing, and then—at the height of his

protestations, he is suddenly calm. He lays aside the shoe which he has been pressing into your unwilling hand. All the fire and fury die down, and Mr. Roggendorf beams. He is his urbane self again. The tall young son who ought to be holding a lily instead of rolls of leather, beautiful as it is, who has a strange, wasted, spiritual look, smiles. All is well.

Just so might Hans Sachs have rated his best customers. There are moments when I am persuaded that Mr. Roggendorf is the Meistersinger from the Opera House, masquerading by day. But then there are always the shoes—gold, silver, blue, grey, purple, green, black and white, and Mr. Roggendorf's shoes look incredibly small on feet that have long been content with comfort rather than elegance, way-faring feet that have stepped many a thousand miles.

During the days of the mark's stability at 98,000 we shunned Mr. Roggendorf and the shops and took our constitutional to Lindenthal, or down the Rhine as far as the Bridge of Boats, where the Calvary looks North up the river to Düsseldorf, past the Wireless Station, where there is still the chasm in the ground left by the shell that very nearly got the Wireless Station in 1918. Or we went by tram to Niehl or to Weiden. We discovered the many forts all around the town which the British were still blowing up when we came last year. The forts belonged to the Autumn, when Pat was still with us.

Pat was death on the forts. He had only to lift his head and look across the wide Autumn flats over which the haze was gathering to detect a fort which we should not have suspected. The forts were concealed in many tree-covered mounds which might have been a natural formation. Whenever there was a fort we had to inspect it under Pat's supervision, even though it involved a tramp across ploughed fields or fields where the earth-worms were excavating and turning up their little spirals of sticky earth. We saw a great many forts, with long stone passages and chambers to either side. The first one we discovered was when we walked by Sulz, the way Pat had come with the 29th Division in December, 1918. Sacred ground! One could see the tired boys, with the uplifted, eager, wondering faces, coming in victorious.

But after Pat left these country walks were lonelier for us, and we should not have cared to approach a fort in the Winter fields. The Rhine was another matter. The long boulevard by the riverside gave one a chance of walking without perpetual skipping from the erratic traffic of the streets, and there were strangely beautiful effects when one looked at the mother-of-pearl sky, with the twin towers of the Dom against it, and St. Kunibert's and St. Martin's beyond the Hohenzollern Bridge.

Going North along the Rhine one faced commercial Germany. Going South one went into the haunted, the dreamy, the poetical, the intellectual Germany.

From Cologne to Bonn and Coblenz and Wiesbaden by the Rhine and through the Seven Mountains and by Königsforst, it is a haunted country. The nixies, the water-spirits and the wood-spirits and the spirits of the hill, lie in wait to capture men's souls and carry them into captivity, leaving but an untenanted house behind.

CHAPTER XIV

BONN AND THE COUNTRY GREEN

WE first discovered that Bonn was cheaper than Cologne from a young officer who always went there to buy his shaving-soap.

There are fifteen miles between Cologne and Bonn, but one can combine pleasure and profit by taking the white tram to Bonn and it is a very good thing to do when one becomes oppressed by the eternal business of Cologne. At Bonn one can forget the factory chimneys, which are as inevitable as the church towers in Cologne

If Cologne lulls one despite its business, Bonn as a residence would put one fast asleep. It has a charm of the Middle Ages. Only the bustling youth, running in the streets when the University opens her quiet doors and disgorges them after class-hours, keeps Bonn from utter sleepiness; and even the swift tide of youth is less noisy, I think, less tumultuous than it would be elsewhere.

There are clean new-washed skies over Bonn in which the church towers stand up sharply. The University is little and low, an old mother of youth and learning, pressed to the earth with age: and

around her the trees and parks are beautiful. Bonn is much inhabited by elderly and old people, many of them English or Irish or Scottish, who love the quietness and peace of the place; many of them who came for a brief rest and quiet and have not had energy to go forth again. Bonn, in the French Occupation, has been kept cheap therefore, since the French soldier, badly paid and in currency that has depreciated, must needs have cheapness.

At Bonn the Rhine begins to be beautiful, with the Drachenfels in sight and the beginning of all the castled crags and heights, Rolandseck, the Lorelei, Ehrenbreitstein, above Coblenz; all the legended names one has known since childhood. They have a strange, sleepy magic for me, which I trace to the fact that in childhood I read and re-read a book into which came all these magical names. It was by Longfellow, I believe, and the stories in it are strangely mixed up in my memory with other books—*Grimm*, *Hans Andersen*, *Undine*; a ghostly book called *Sidonia the Sorceress* and something of Bulwer Lytton's—was that called *Pilgrims of the Rhine*?

These misty and entangled memories make, I think, the proper medium by which to see the Rhine. As I passed a station the name Andernach leaped out to meet me and I remembered the story of the Little Christ of Andernach in one of those books. There was a tapping on the wet roof in the night, and someone said: "It is the Little Christ of Andernach." That was a clear fragment emerging from

the confused mass of a child's reading, in which there was also, I think, the *Sentimental Journey*.

Close to the bridge at Bonn where you take the steamer for the enchanted journey down the Rhine was a *Bier-halle*, into which we went for anything to drink on a very hot Summer day. There was nothing to be had but beer, and plainly we had no business there, for it was a students' *Bier-halle* and *Bier-garten* outside: it was rough and rather dirty, deliberately so, I think, with the ostentatious Bohemianism of the Quartier, of which all University students are freemen.

We were very glad we made the venture, for, in the smoky and somewhat grimy atmosphere we sat at a wooden table scored deeply so that the surface was rugged, with the names of many generations of students. Under my glass of *Dünnkel* stood out boldly in capitals: HESSE.

The students were in all the tea-shops, and there were other memories—of Heine and the *Studenten* songs: of "The Pope he leads a jolly life"; and such gay catches. There were ex-Bonn students in the Army of Occupation who kept up old friendships, despite the War and all it had cost. On Sundays it was a favourite pastime for the students to go down the river on the river steamers jeering at the French Occupation as they went by.

If the German towns are immortally old the country is perennially new. I like to think of that Rhine country as I saw it in Spring, having seen it also in

Autumn and Winter. The river runs between hills at either side. By the foot of the hills is the adorable orchard country in which one hears the very heart of the Rhineland beating. There is a lovely stretch of it between Bonn and Königswinter. There are little houses snowily white, criss-crossed in black—black-and-white houses make the Rhineland villages beautiful—each standing in Spring in its orchard of palest green, its feet in the silk of the grass, overhead the pale, heavenly, first foliage of the apple-trees, the feathery snow of cherry and pear and plum. I choose to remember it as I saw it so in Spring, not in Autumn or Winter. Here and there will be a little village of black-and-white houses clustered round a church-tower. God is never forgotten in the Rhineland.

When the bloom is at its full the fairy snow is shaken over all the hillsides, lying on a background of pale green. Under the trees you see the demure children in their bright frocks, with animals, a lamb or a kid, a kitten or a dog. The Rhineland children are very fond of their animals. They are always carrying puppies or kittens, or leading a dog by a string if it is in the streets.

Through this orchard country little paths go away under the trees towards the hills, making one hungry to go with them. It is all so peaceful, so quiet, that it might be still-life, but for the birds and the children. It is strange to think that from such orchard peace the boys went forth to the War.

Across the wide river it is just the same. From the Drachenfels one counted many villages lying amid the blossom and the fairy green. No wonder that the child one of us spoke to on the Drachenfels who had a little English and was eager to hear about England, being asked if she would like to go to England, replied: "This is too beautiful."

The country roads in the Rhineland are planted with fruit trees, apple, pear, plum and cherry. To each village belongs an allotted stretch of the fruitage. Therefore is so much of the Rhineland orchard country. The white trams take you everywhere, at least to the edge of this Paradise. One day in a forty miles motor-drive, during which we were never further than about fourteen miles from Cologne, we ran through miles of this exquisite orchard country, between low hills, with cattle browsing on the hillsides under the trees, the birds singing and a trout river going placidly with us all the way. Now and again there were the fine iron gates, the lichen-stained walls, the moat of some old *Schloss*, and on a hill standing out against the sky were the towers and gables of a castle of the Metternichs, who are still in the Rhineland.

In one of these quietest valleys we came upon an ancient Abbey Church, its low monastic buildings turned into cottages, itself painfully white and clean against the background of bronze and green and gold and purple hill. We got admission to it. It was all cold white except the golden windows which

are supposed to be the oldest glass in Germany. They had not yet learned to blend colours with the gold.

Since it was an overcast evening, with a low rumble of thunder beyond the hills, the golden windows did not do much to warm the building. It was beautiful, but white and cold as the dead. It had been restored by some *Graf*, sometime in the last century presumably, and all the mellowness had been taken away from it. It was icily cold. The knight and lady, side by side on their stone bed, their hands stiffly clasped, their feet immobile with death, the mitred Abbot, sleeping eternally in stone, might have lent their cold to the frozen place. It had a beautiful groined roof and high springing pillars and arches, but its beauty was all dead and rigid. One had a terrified feeling as the door clanged. Supposing one got locked in! One would as surely die of cold on the May night as though one spent it in a cave of ice.

The altar was beautiful in stone, but dead like all the rest. There was no sanctuary lamp. The *Graf* had made it a condition of his restoration that the church should be used alternately for the Mass and for Lutheran services. One felt there the Real Absence.

One day when Pat was still with us we walked across the fields behind Lindenthal, where they were making the stadium for the great Industrial Exhibition which was to have been opened in May, 1923.

We wandered away over the wide fields and by farmhouses to Masdorf, where we should get the white tram back to Cologne. After we had done with the excavations and the little temporary railways and the heaps of earth we got into a field-path. The hares ran under our feet shaking the wet from their ears : there had been frost which had melted in the sun. The larks piped from the grass, but did not soar. All over the wide space was the wide sky.

There was no loneliness, for that comes in a place hemmed in by mountains. There was no eeriness ; no shadow. Far across the plain you could see all that was to be seen. A solitary factory chimney stood up prominently. A ploughman driving his team of oxen called to us : but it was a kindly warning : we were taking a turn which had no exit. Many paths intersected the plain, running by and between the crops. We passed a little farmhouse in the midst of the fields. By the palings stood a glass-fronted shrine of the Madonna and Child. There was a tiny village adjoining to which no road led. It had the electric light like all villages, even the least, in Germany and Italy.

A little further on, where the paths divided sharply, one going West, one East, against a coppice of trees stood up a tall Crucifix.

Evening was falling over the fields, damp and a little chill. There was a mist rising from the ground. One felt somehow that the fields were innocent : they were shepherded.

There was an old farmhouse, enclosed by a moat in which some boys were still fishing, just where we left the fields for the *pavé* road, side by side with which runs the rails for the white trams that at this point have become railway trains. There was an old house shuttered and lonely as only houses can be. Across the way from it was an overgrown garden in all the russet tints of Autumn. We turned and went in, walking deep in the orange and russet of the shed leaves. The grass was very long about our feet. Now and again as we moved an overhanging bough caught at us, or the grass twined about our feet as though it would hold us.

Before we went in we had not guessed that the garden held its twilight secrets. Midway of it there was a statue of Pan, the goat-footed god, bent and weary, the stone eaten into by the centuries. There was a dry pond filled in with the leaves and a fountain. Over a broken pergola trailed a few half-wild roses.

The twilight was blotting out the fields when we made our last discovery. Under a penthouse stood what we took to be an ancient stone water-trough, which on closer inspection revealed itself as the stone coffin of a child. We were able to decipher a portion of the inscription cut deep in the stone. The child, five years old, had died in the reign of the Emperor Tetrarch—there was a blank—in the year 206.

Was it brought there by some virtuoso, some

travelled person, or had the child lived here when Cologne was an outpost of Imperial Rome?

It was quiet death we had found in the garden, gentle death and nothing of which to be afraid. The goat-footed one crouched very low there, worn and fretted as though he knew long ago that his reign was over. Across the wide plain gazed the sightless eyes of the Figure on the Cross and the placid image of the Mother. The garden too was kept and shepherded.

Another of our discoveries was an ancient fort where the soldiers slept when they guarded the old town-wall in the Middle Ages. A portion of the wall still stands and there were large echoing courts one after the other, arches and gateways and places that looked like prison cells, barred and dark. I should not have gone there alone on an Autumn afternoon, but Pat ran through the courtyards, waking the echoes, and after we had seen what was to be seen we climbed up steps and came out on the ramparts, which had been transformed into a garden. That day the garden beds were bare and the standard roses stood up as mere naked rods, but it was a garden and the place had the air of austere waiting which belongs to a Winter garden.

There was not a creature there but ourselves and I was glad enough to leave the strange echoing place and get back again to the streets and houses. This place lay just behind the splendid new Law Courts in the Kanalstrasse that runs round a part

of Cologne, following perhaps the way of the old town-walls and gateways. It is a way kept open where you may walk under trees. It is designed to be a park one day. The park is to begin at the Aachener Tor, just beyond the railway as one goes out to Lindenthal, a waste No Man's Land, where circuses and shows of one kind or another used to have their pitch. Cologne is never tired of beautifying herself.

I came back again to the old fort on one of the very warm days of the end of March, 1923. The courtyards were full of shouting and running children ; and in the garden, sweet with the hardy Spring flowers, crowds of women sat sewing with their babies sleeping beside them.

Wherever the gardening mind of Cologne finds a waste, ugly space it says : " Here shall we make a garden ! " and sets out to make it. The most crowded streets open upon a choice of gardens.

CHAPTER XV

THE WINTER

ONE was never tired of wondering about the mind of the Rhinelanders. On Armistice Day there was a Parade with the Two Minutes' Silence. We looked down from the windows of G.H.Q. on the Dom Platz and the packed masses of Germans standing on the pavements and anywhere they were allowed to stand, ten deep, looking on with an absorbed interest.

It was the same when Lord Derby came and there was a review. The Germans crowd to everything in the shape of a military pageant.

In the mornings there was the sound of martial music and marching feet and the soldiers passed under our windows on a route march. Every adult German stood to stare. The boys run with the soldiers as they might at home.

One wonders what is in their minds. One day, noticing a couple of German men of the better class, obviously and sadly marked by the War, standing to gaze at the soldiers as they went by, I thought I had a revelation. Was it that the soldier stirred in them, the soldier cut off from soldiering, watching the great game as played by his late enemies?

Again one saw the mysterious emotion in the almost tremulous excitement of our Frau when a British officer came to tea or dinner.

At the Requiem for the Allied Dead at the Minor-itenkirche, on All Souls' Day, there was a great attendance of Germans, side by side with the Allied Forces, the British, the soldierly French, lean and austere, the Americans from Coblenz, the Algerians and Tunisians of the French Army.

There was the Catafalque draped with the Allied Flags: around it, motionless, stood the Guard of Honour, a British, a French, a Belgian, an American soldier, all in full War kit, carrying their rifles—so still that they might have been statues and not men. Behind was the background of the altar, heavily draped in black. There were no colours but the flags: no flowers, but a great blaze of lights.

The music was wonderful. After the Last Post had been sounded, a strange call to the Dead—we asked about the beautiful music of the Requiem. It was the choir of St. Kunibert's, one of the oldest churches in Cologne, the twin towers of which stand up in the panorama of the town seen from across the river like a smaller Dom.

It was a German choir that had been crying with so piercing a sweetness for the Allied Dead.

People who did not like to part with their prejudices, or were incapable of doing it, used to say: "It is only policy. They hate us in their hearts!" If you held them to it they said—"Well, not as

individuals." At first we certainly thought the friendliness too good to be true, but one got over that. A thousand kindnesses could not be prompted by policy—not the children who brought their puppies in the streets for us to handle and fondle; not the women who stood to smile at us; not the people who laughed at your ignorance of German, so that you were at least as much exhilarated as they.

I can believe that few of the British Occupation or the civilians of Cologne got so near the people as we did. It is the kneeling at the same altar makes all the difference, to say nothing of the fact that there is a certain likeness in temperament between the Irish and the Rhinelanders.

I concede that the Occupation must have begun the friendliness. It is an easy Occupation. In the Rhineland as elsewhere England pursues her policy of holding Europe with a corporal's guard. Her soldiers walk about unarmed. They fraternize: they take German wives. The administration, unlike the French, makes very little fuss.

Occasionally one comes upon an Englishman, no longer a soldier, who has married a German woman and ceased to be of the English. One conjectures tragic stories there. They have a strange lonely look; the look of men without a country. The soldiers do not take it like that. There were no misgivings apparently about the German wives and children, no desire to hide them away.

There is a certain desperate criminal quarter along the Rhine bank, known as the Buttermarkt. It was, I suppose, originally a Butter-Market: but it has long ceased to be anything so innocent. It lies between the Heumarkt and the river. Close by it is the old Stapelhaus, which is now a canteen for British soldiers.

The Buttermarkt presents a most picturesque front to the river in tall old houses with narrow windows and beautiful sharp gables cutting the blue sky. It is wonderful how old windows can become like old eyes. I have seen a pair of windows close together in a country cottage and they were as much like owl's eyes peering at you from under a gable as possible. At the back the Buttermarkt reveals what it has come to be—one of the 'Thieves' Clearing Houses of Europe. It is sinister and very dangerous. Various narrow mouths of streets enter it and are swallowed up.

At these entrances there are placards: "This is Out of Bounds for British and Allied Troops."

Despite that notice British Tommies have wandered in there at one time or another and have not emerged, or so it is said. The Buttermarkt is reported to have its own ways down to the river. I have been told that there was a time when the British Military Authorities contemplated clearing out the Buttermarkt, but abandoned the idea. The man who told me added: "It would have cost half a battalion"; but that may have been mere

picturesqueness. Other sinister mouths of streets have the warning notices upon them. There are some very bad criminal slums down behind the Severinplatz. The rats make for the river. A young police-officer told me that there are inhabitants of the Buttermarkt who have not left it for thirty years. Those open mouths are like the mouth of a sewer.

The same young police-officer said that he had ridden through the Buttermarkt at the head of a squad of his men—by way of an adventure.

My friend, Mr. Apfel, says: "If a British soldier should disappear in the Buttermarkt—well, it is his own fault! He knows he should not have gone there. If he was French—the town would be under arrest for murder."

I do not answer for the whole truth of his remark, but it expresses the situation.

There is much friendly co-operation between the German and the British Military Police. So at the Horse Show there is a class for which the German Police are allowed to enter. The two bodies seemed to be on excellent terms with each other. The French obviously did not like it.

I wonder very much if the Germans would crowd to see a French military spectacle. Perhaps they would not be allowed to look on at it.

At Coblenz I was strangely reminded of the Requiem for the Allied Dead in Cologne and the choristers of St. Kunibert's. We had gone to the

Garrison Church which was French. One might well ask if the church belonged to God or the Allies, for the Allied colours were everywhere. Before the Mass began something was given out in a loud hectoring voice which made us turn to stare at the speaker. It was an official of the church, ordering all Germans into the galleries, where they went meekly. The English never trail the conqueror's coat like that.

The fall of the mark went on, and some time in the Winter of 1922-3 one began to hear more insistently of the hunger. The German hunger hides itself. It is behind the dignified house-fronts of the University towns and the quarters where the professional classes have lived in comfort. The English wife of a German Professor had some harrowing tales to tell. She was sick to see some of her country-people, and when one of us went, set food before her. She had done her best, but it was so pitifully meagre that the guest could not bear to touch it: it was so evident that they required the tiny portions more than she did. The Professor's wife said that they were much better off than their professional brethren, because her English friends sent her money in sterling from time to time. Service was a thing of the past. She did all the housework, besides earning a little by painting and writing. Meat was almost unknown to them. When their daughter went for their Summer holiday walk to the North Sea they took only bread, like the Wander-Vögel.

Her husband helped her in the work of the house in between his own various occupations.

Some of the stories I have forgotten. One I remember was of a Professor's wife who took on, besides the housework, much of the writing to be done in the preparation of her husband's work. It was Summer-time and the work was unusually strenuous. One day in frying fat some of the fat from the pan fell on to her hand and arm, scalding them badly. She said nothing about it to anybody, but later in the day fainted over her secretarial work. A doctor who came noticed something amiss with her eyes while bandaging her hand and arm. Further examination discovered that she had cataracts on both eyes. She had been going blind without telling anyone.

A gift of clothing to the first lady provoked disproportionate gratitude. The clothing was not new by any means. "I cannot tell you how delighted I am," she wrote. "Now, I can appear in public with a fashionable dress."

It was the fashion of four years earlier, though the garment had been little worn.

Behind these house-fronts of the professional classes in the University towns one divined so much of shabbiness, of dustiness, of pinching and paring, of incessantly doing without. "A reel of cotton costs 400 marks," wrote my friend to me sometime in the Winter of 1922. "I have just had to buy one."

Professional salaries were never very large in

Germany. It is one of the eternal problems—how do they live? Supposing the salary before the War was 10,000 marks a year, then equivalent to £500 of our money, which would be a handsome salary for a German Professor—that sum at the time of writing would represent less than a shilling. If my friend bought a reel of cotton in May, 1923, she would pay 1200 marks for it, or 150 marks the metre.

My Frau came home one day when she had been appealing against one of the many taxes, and told me that she had met an old friend in the queue and had to look several times before she was sure of him. He was so white, so cold, so small. She said to him: "I am sorry to see you looking so ill." He answered: "But the eggs have gone and the butter and the meat. There is only bread and a little margarine, and soon there will be no money for that."

He had been living on his capital, invested before the War to bring him an income on which he could live. These were sad days for the provident, the people who had made the nest-egg against the rainy day—a mixed metaphor, I know—and had rested when old age began, saying: "Now we have earned our rest."

It was better to have been improvident and to have had a good time with the money, for now the wastrel and the thrifty were in like case.

After that incident had been reported to me I began to notice the old couples who crawled about in the Winter sun, in the various parks and gardens,

or knelt in the churches—they were all as pale as the dead.

On a day shortly before Christmas, 1922, my Frau brought me to see an old lady who had been a famous *prima donna*.

Does any traveller with a long memory remember Anna Reisch, *prima donna* at the Wiesbaden Opera House ? She last sang there in 1889 when she married, after which she appeared only to sing before kings and emperors. They say she was one of the great singers of Germany.

I had seen many photographs of her in her beautiful youth, photographs in character, with various letters from royal personages, cuttings from newspapers, programmes of the Opera where she had appeared with the greatest artists, herself one among them.

She was living at Sulz, the dreary suburb of a great manufacturing town. The block of workmen's flats faced an open space, all mud and debris, whereon other blocks of the terrible flat buildings will soon go up to shut out the sky from the dingy street. It was an uncomfortable day of wind and rain, following many days of yellow skies and drizzle.

A German lady came to meet us with news of calamity. A lamp had exploded, and the flame had burnt all one side of the poor *prima donna's* body before help came. It was told us with tears. Apparently she had kept friendship and love.

We offered to go away : it was no time for a visit ; but the friend was certain Anna Reisch would be

terribly disappointed. She was expecting us ; so we went in.

We had expected to find her in bed, but she was reclining in a long chair, showing no sign of pain. She said of herself : " I have great spirit," and she had.

The apartment was a kitchen, small, smelling of the sink and the gas-stove, full of all manner of kitchen furniture, terribly stuffy. Surreptitiously the friend opened a slit of window. I suppose the poor *prima donna* was very cold.

She was seventy-six. She married a Russian, and went with him to live at Riga, where he died fifteen years after their marriage. She showed us his picture, gallant and young, like a tenor at the opera. We were not told how the poverty came, but she had a very wealthy sister in Russia who had allowed her to want for nothing till the ruin came upon Russia.

She was still a very pretty old lady, with soft white curls, bound with a black ribbon round her head, as though somebody loved her, as certainly someone did. She talked very freely, with not the least suggestion that she was in pain. She showed us her hand that was beautiful in the pictures—her left hand, all stained and roughened. She was cooking and sewing for a living till she had a stroke a year earlier—now the hand was useless.

She had had one special friend, a Grand Duchess, at whose house she had been a constant guest. They told me, as though I must know, of the first Grand

Duke : how, being a very wealthy man, he had advanced great sums on loan to a King of Prussia and, entertaining him at his wonderful house, he had had a fire lit of precious woods—cinnamon wood they said—and laying all the acknowledgments of the debts on the flames had let them go up the chimney. Hence the Grand Dukedom.

I asked how the *prima donna* lived now and was told that the working people in the house kept her alive, contributed to pay her rent, spared her from what food they had, always seeing that if there was anything of a dainty she should have it. I suppose these people with the love of music and song and the gift of it, would have great honour for a Queen of Song, even if she had come to sitting in the kitchen, like Cinderella. An old servant of hers would sometimes come and see to her maintenance for weeks at a time, wrapping her about with love and care.

I think she would not be so pretty nor so petulant (for she had been petulant about a visit which did not come off, threatening, like a dear naughty old child, to throw her Bible into the fire) if she was not loved well and petted.

When I made a little offering she kissed my hand ; and when I said : “ An artist may give to an artist,” and it was translated to her she was highly pleased.

We saw two other rooms which were hers, with good substantial furniture—a bedroom and a sitting-room—but apparently she did not use them : they were too cold and fuel too dear, and old blood runs

thinly, especially when one cannot get about: so she lived in the kitchen, where it was warm.

Her friend explained that all the furniture had been sold to keep her alive, but the purchasers would not remove it while she lived.

I had meant to go to see Anna Reisch again, but she died in the cold snap of May, 1923.

CHAPTER XVI

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

PEOPLE had said to us when we came first :
“ You should stay for Christmas. Christmas is beautiful here.”

England has grown jaded about Christmas and more's the pity. In Rhineland the feeling is as fresh as in England of the Middle Ages. It is the great Child-Festival of the year.

For some days before Christmas every open space had been turned into a Christmas-Tree market, where people all day were pricing and purchasing. The great Christmas-Tree market is held, however, in the Neumarkt, where not only trees but toys are sold in great quantities. There the domestic-minded German man is to be seen with his Frau buying toys and presents for all his circle. The children look on dazed with pleasure, forgetting the insufficient food and fire. Excitement had brought a colour to their cheeks, which soon faded away. German children were very pale in those days, though I cannot say that they were less high-spirited as the time passed. Indeed, I have not seen a greater vivacity anywhere among children.

Most shops display and sell Christmas Trees—such Trees as make us all children. They were of many sizes and varieties. There were baby trees in tiny pots dotted with scarlet berries : there were frozen forest-trees : there were trees like the Lorelei all dressed in frozen snow that was as a mantle of silver hair or a tall fountain : there were trees shaped like little forest houses, or like the Manger where Our Lord lay at 12 o' the clock on Christmas Eve. There is no one so poor in the German town at Christmas that he or she will not have the Christmas Tree.

The shop-windows, apart from the blaze of presents, were all most fancifully decorated. One of the big shops had a whole range of windows given over to tableaux from the Fairy Tales. Those windows were always crowded. The men, as much as the women and children or more, pressed their faces to the windows to see the drama of the Richmodienhaus, with the familiar horses' heads hanging from the window, as well as Rumpelstiltskin, Rapunzel, Big Klaus and Little Klaus and the rest of the immortal company.

Every house rejoices and every table is decorated for Christmas ; there is not one who will not give or receive presents. The great festivities begin on Christmas Eve when the families are gathered at six o'clock in the morning to drink coffee by the light of the candles on the Christmas Tree. The Trees are non-inflammable. Even the Tree that is like the Lorelei spreads the mantle of rimy frost, which

is powdered glass, over the lit candles with perfect impunity.

The Christmas presents are laid at the foot of the Tree around which the family sings Christmas Carols. Christmas is a solemn festival: in the evening if you take your walks abroad every window will show its lit Tree, and you will hear the singing voices.

The children are much in evidence, as is right in these Christmas rejoicings, since it is their festival. All these houses and flats, the multitudinous flats of Cologne, have their Crib as well as their Christmas Tree. England, alas! in the main, has lost that most beautiful of all the Christmas toys.

There are none like the Germans for toys. It is the eternal child in them. The doll population of Cologne must be almost as great as the human population. Dolls are in the shop-windows where you would least expect to find them. The flower-shop windows, for example, have whole bevvies of dolls. The merchandise of the shop has very often its sign in a doll or a toy. To give a somewhat gloomy illustration the shop-windows of an undertaker will have a row of tiny tombstones at the head of toy-graves.

But the Cribs are delicious: they are so innocent. Of course, there are splendid ones in the churches, but I love the minute ones that go with the tiny, tiny children who at home would be in a pram or in somebody's arms, but here are minute citizens of Cologne, toddling about alone or held up by an older

child or an adult. It must be the constant contemplation of these tiny, flaxen-haired creatures that keeps the Rhinelander's heart so young, that makes even the adult male wear that strangely child-like look.

The Crib was at the foot of the family Christmas Tree in the German part of our flat. The tiny figures of Mother and Child, of the Foster-Father and the Kings and Shepherds, the Ox and the Ass, all nestled in the moss at the foot of the Tree.

It was a strange experience four years after the Armistice, to be by invitation of the group that gathered about that Christmas Tree. The whole family was there, sitting round a table, on which were displayed their Christmas presents. There was another table with wine and fruit and cakes and sweets : in the centre the lit Tree.

We said our words of Good-Will and we drank a glass of wine and ate a slice of cake. Then the family gathered about the Tree and sang that most beautiful Christmas Carol, "*O Heilige Nacht!*" We shook hands all round solemnly when the singing was done and withdrew. It was strange to think that little more than four years ago we were killing each other.

There were splendid services in all the Churches. Our Frau, who is the Lutheran stepmother of Catholic children, begged me to go to the Mass in the Dom at six o'clock. There were the most beautiful ceremonies of all and the most wonderful music. A lady she had taken there one Christmas, not a Catholic,

had fainted away from a wonder and delight too great for human endurance.

I did not put it to the test although I have enough of the child still in me to rejoice freshly every year at going through the dark, with the stars overhead, to a Midnight Mass or a Mass before dawn.

When Christmas was over I used to delight in watching the children at the Cribs in the various churches.

There is a little chapel, open all day, attached to some sort of Almshouse for old priests, between the Ursulnplatz and the Post Office. There I had watched the old priests build the Crib, with much sawing and hammering, as of a Carpenter's Shop, in the days before Christmas.

That is a little chapel of a most devotional atmosphere. There are always people praying there, people coming and going.

The Crib had a glorious Star lit by electricity; and instead of being all taken down about Epiphany Time, as is customary, it went right on to Shrove Tuesday. Only there and in Ireland have I seen the innocence of the Coming of the Magi. They were not in evidence at all at Christmas. A few days later they arrived at the end of the little chapel, suddenly, to the wonder and delight of the children. Every day they went a bit further up the aisle, till on Twelfth Day they were arrived and worshipping by the Crib.

The children were always blowing in and out of the seventy churches of Cologne. I leave three for

the Lutheran Churches. The door opened and they came in as on a wind, dropped a curtsey and blew out again with the closing of a door. They crowded into all the services, especially in the poorer quarters of the town. St. Ursula's is always full of children. These great and stately temples are only their Father's House to the children.

In the little chapel, all these weeks from Christmas to Shrove, there was an incessant opening and closing of doors, an incessant dragging of infant feet after guardian-infants, imperceptibly older than their charges. It was an unbroken pilgrimage to the Crib, an ever-moving train of infinitesimal folk with heads like primroses.

If the Star was not lit, as it sometimes was not, there was always some kind adult to switch it on. I wonder if children in Germany are ever considered a trouble or in the way as they are often at home among the island people! To be sure the German child is never spoilt, never self-conscious, though much beloved. I have sometimes in the German streets seen a group of elderly men all bent in delight and worship over a tiny child.

The children used to stare wide-eyed at the Star. The slightly-older infants would lift the others to see the Child and His Mother far back in the Stable-Cave. Oh, the ministrations of these infants to each other! I have seen three children in a row sitting on a doorstep, just a little bigger than birds and perched like birds on a branch. One had fallen

down and been hurt. To him came a little mother of about four, with a sweet to console him. The children of the dangerous street made one's heart soft as wax.

When they had gazed their fill of wonder at the Crib the children went out backwards, dropping curtseys as they went. Sometimes one would run in with a withered flower in a tightly closed little hand and lay it at the foot of the Crib.

Christmas was a time of great delight for the children. They were at the shop-windows all day. There were so many beautiful things to look at, not dull beautiful things for grown-ups, but wonderful things for children.

All those touching and appealing children, or nearly all, came from the working-class streets about St. Ursula's. These are the ones I knew best and saw oftenest. There were incidents every day which one could not do justice to in words : one wanted so much to paint the pretty scene. Once I saw a boy of seven or eight overtake a little girl of perhaps six. She was carrying a large umbrella in one hand and her little body was bent sideways by the weight of a full basket, which swung from her minute left-arm. The little boy had also a basket. They were always carrying heavy baskets, poor lambs ! The boy came level with the little girl, slipped his own basket to his left-arm and lifted hers with his right-arm without a word. She was left gazing at him in amazement from under the shade of the large umbrella.

I thought it was one of the prettiest, most knightly things I had ever seen.

Unnoticed, we dropped a note into the little boy's basket, as we often did into the baskets of little boys and girls in the trams. One was not encouraged to bind up wounds or express sympathy in that way. The children literally in those early days did not seem to know what the mark notes meant or what they stood for. Once such a plaster offered a little boy who had fallen and torn himself badly, was rejected with something that was oddly like terror. We gave up offering the children money. Some adult German had always to interfere before the child would accept it.

It is terrible to be told that tuberculosis and rickets are rife among these beautiful children. Sometimes one saw the tuberculosis in the sharp faces, enormous eyes and wasted limbs. I saw a little boy obviously marked for death, walking hand-in-hand with a little sister. They were engaged in such close and eager conversation that I was startled when he looked backward and I caught a glimpse of the yellow face with the skin drawn tightly over the bones.

Once we gave money to a little girl in a stationer's shop. I forget why we gave it, because she was not of the poor. It was Christmas-time and we thought perhaps that there was something she wanted which she had not been able to get. She took the note and, apparently under the impression that it was

a piece of waste paper, deposited it tidily in a waste-paper basket.

Ritterstrasse is the thoroughfare in which most of my child friends lived and we came to be very well known there and received many smiles as we went up and down. I should think that nearly every infant in Ritterstrasse must have received a scooter or a roller-skate from Santa Claus at Christmas. Santa Claus must be a more reckless Saint than one would desire as the children's Saint, but perhaps he is sure of the protection. Ritterstrasse, a narrow street with the linked trams running through it, takes the overflow of the less-trafficked streets to either side which are more properly the children's playgrounds. The children were everywhere. There must be some heavenly interposition else there would be a fearful decrease in the children of the Ritterstrasse and the surrounding streets. Sometimes the children are killed as the dogs are killed—there is an enormous dog population in Cologne—but happily I have not seen either a dog or a child killed.

What one did see in Cologne, and it is very sad, is a disproportionate number of cripples and dwarfs and hunchbacks. The large families, doubtless, which means less of the mother's care for the children, and the entrusting of them to children little older than themselves.

But those mothers of the Ritterstrasse and the Wiedengasse, and the other mean streets, I salute

them ! You will not find an insufficiently-clad child in many walks through the working-class streets. The hand of the mother and the heart of the mother is over them all. The little girls have their flaxen hair tied up with gay ribbons : they are comfortably clad in Winter in wonderfully coloured little jumpers and skirts. In Summer they come out in muslin frocks and white shoes on Sundays. The little boys in Winter all have fur collars to their coats ; and the pet dogs are tied with green and pink ribbons round their little bodies. It is obvious that the dogs as well as the children have loving mothers.

Of course, there was employment for all who could work in the poor streets, subsidies for each child of the large families, and a huge maternity benefit for the mother.

The women themselves were always neat, with beautifully tidy hair, which they wear uncovered. The baskets they carry on their arms are covered with a clean white cloth. When you see Papa and Mamma take out Baby in a pram, the baby will lie under a snowy coverlet and hood, lace-trimmed or embroidered.

How the frowsy slum-dwellers of our countries would stare !

These women of the working-class are far better to look at than their sisters of the middle-class at the same age. They lead a more active and more outdoor life, and their poverty is doubtless far less grinding.

In the mass I take these Rhineland mothers to be Saints. One has only to see them in the churches and before the altars. They are very soft-hearted and tender mothers. I cannot recall ever to have seen them harsh or impatient with a child—nor with an animal. The children are not less precious because there are so many of them, but more. The women's dogs are well spoilt. The men may bully their dogs by way of training them, the women never.

There are no slatterns among these women, no fluttering rags: no dirty faces and towsled heads. An intelligent young woman at the dyer's, to whom I expressed wonder and admiration at finding the children so well dressed, said: "If a woman was to have her children badly dressed she would be looked down upon by her neighbours. They would not speak to her: she would have no friends."

The women of the Ritterstrasse and the Wiedengasse and such streets probably produce an infant every year. At home with us such fecundity would excuse a tattered untidiness in the woman and her offspring. These mothers do not seem unduly weighed down by their maternity. They have a brisk, efficient look. In normal circumstances the children would be as vigorous as any children in the world.

CHAPTER XVII

THE FRENCH INVASION

WE went down to Coblenz for the first week-end of January, 1923, as the guests of some officials of the Rhineland High Commission. The Americans were just leaving. Even in January Coblenz was fresh and fair, the fastest running river in Europe spreading before it placidly : frowning down upon it Ehrenbreitstein with its fortified slopes, the castle on the top showing the Stars and Stripes. Coblenz was still of the Americans. We caught a glimpse of General Allen flashing by in his car. The praise of the Americans was in many mouths, and the Germans were very sad because the last of them were going. There had been fifteen thousand Americans in Coblenz a year earlier : there were then only fifteen hundred. The Britisher and the American do not always agree, but we heard nothing but good of them, from General Allen, who looked rigidly after his boys, down to the youngest and most careless of them.

They had made Coblenz hum. The place had the sleepy restfulness of the Rhine towns, but as our hosts said, sighing regretfully : " Ah, you should have been here when the Americans were here."

The French had just entered the Ruhr. They were not amiable towards their Allies. We had a chance meeting with a friend we had made in Cologne—a very fine Highland gentleman, with the pride of his race. While we dined with him at the Kaiserhof, which was still the American Mess, he told us about an unpleasant altercation he had had with a French officer in the train coming down from Cologne.

There were disquieting rumours about. We arose at 6.30 on the Monday morning so that we might travel back in a military carriage with an officer of the Occupation who had been a fellow-guest for the week-end. There was an unacknowledged fear of the coloured troops and a hankering after the comparative security of Cologne, although there too was uneasiness, and the young men were marching in the streets of nights slaying the French in their popular song.

We travelled up with two French *sous-officiers* and an American. The American read *Colonel Repington* all the way standing by the carriage door with his back to us, his revolver almost touching the one of us who had the corner seat. We might have been non-existent for the *sous-officiers*. There were no courtesies. They never seemed aware of our presence.

In Cologne excited groups were standing about everywhere discussing the situation. The windows of the newspaper offices and the places where the

latest bulletins were posted were surrounded by crowds eager for the news. The flight from the mark was forgotten as a matter for discussion. There was nothing talked of but the French in the Ruhr: and every night the marching young men went by singing their fierce song in which they were going to slay the Franzosen.

The English, who had been always more tolerable than the French in the people's estimation—it was on the whole an easy Occupation and some of the conquerors had come to like the conquered, the men especially—suddenly leaped to the position of friends and protectors. When you entered a shop you were immediately the centre of an excited interest. There was a terrible rumour that the English were going. In the streets people stopped us to ask if it was true, with a flash of tears in their eyes. “The English are not going?” they would cry. “They are not going to leave our beautiful town to the French?”

At first, I think, they expected English intervention. The place buzzed with rumours. For several days the R.T.O. at the Cologne Haupt Bahnhof was a popular hero on the report that he had bidden the French, “Thus far shalt thou go and no farther.” We had always to be remembering that we must be loyal to our Allies, refraining from giving an opinion about the action of the French, while offering a meed of personal sympathy.

People were very jumpy at that time. If the

troops went out for a route-march, the sound of the music and the marching feet brought the people rushing in terror to their windows and doors. The crowds pressed more thickly in the streets to see the soldiers go by, and the little boys ran with them a longer way and in greater numbers. There was always the terror that this was the evacuation beginning. When you looked down from your balcony the people in the other balconies called out: "They are not going? They are not going?" Once my Frau came to ask us to speak to the little servant-maid who was crouched on her knees on the floor, crying out that the English were going and the French would have Cologne.

These extravagant fears, as it seemed then, were largely the effect of the ill-advised policy of the French in employing the black and coloured troops in their Occupation. I never yet found anyone to say a word for that policy. An Army of Occupation is hard enough to bear—but black troops billeted in the houses of white women! It was intolerable, even to the British women who, much more than the men, kept up the hatreds of the War.

I am not an Englishwoman, but, looking down from our balcony on the little line of marching men going by to the strains of the martial music I felt as an imaginative Englishwoman might, seeing all that as a symbol and what it stood for. Blood is thicker than water, and the War has put a blood bond between me and those beside whom my sons

and the flower of my young countrymen fought. Therefore I had to be silent about our Allies, and therefore I felt as a patriotic and imaginative English-woman might feel, while I remembered that those who flung themselves upon me for sympathy had been a great enemy and that they also had given their sons and much more besides that we have not been called upon to give.

There was great disappointment among the Germans when the English only dissented. That was part of the childishness of the people. Nothing more could have been expected in reason, but their confidence had been childlike.

Still, some of the conquerors, mainly women, or men who had not been in the War, went on saying: "It is all policy. They hate us just as much as the French, but they are more afraid of the French."

I believe they were wrong. Perhaps they spoke out of what was in their own hearts. Perhaps they understood the people less well than I did, who am nearer to them in temperament. Certainly many of them had never any personal touch with the people among whom they lived, beyond buying from them or employing them as servants. Perhaps they would have felt differently if they had knelt with the Germans in their churches. Religion is a strong bond.

Women whose minds are not cultivated, who have not suffered, and suffering is the cultivation of the heart, are apt to be the repositories of a crude

patriotism. I had a terrible meeting one day in a crowded tram with the wife of an N.C.O., a sharp, bustling, capable woman who was the owner of a very pretty little girl. For my sins I commented on the charm of the little girl, and then the trouble began. They were going back to England the next day. After some talk about the unemployment the little woman remarked to the tram generally that it was all the fault of them that didn't finish the job with the 'Uns: "Wot I says is, w'y didn't we do wot the French wanted us to do—beat 'em right back to Berlin? Let 'em 'ave it proper. These yere 'Uns they're not 'alf-beaten yet. Full of oats, they are. I'm with the French all the time. Make 'em pay, I says, an' there needn't be no unemployment at 'ome."

She was an indomitable woman. I accord her my unwilling admiration. But it was a bad quarter of an hour for me. The round eyes of the Germans stared fixedly. There was hardly a man or woman there who did not understand English. The conversation, after the start, was a monologue. It was still in full flow when the tram put me down at my destination, mentally vowing that never again should I bring such a thing upon myself.

If I had been English I should have felt the situation in these days more acutely than I did. The confidence was so terrible knowing that there could be no policy of intervention—and they *would* go on believing in it. However, as time passed and

the English did not evacuate Cologne the feeling settled down. If I had hated the Germans up to that time I should have felt that there was nothing for me to do but love them as one loves something dependent, with reservations perhaps as to what might be the state of affairs if the dependence was the other way.

But about that time people began to say that the Germans were playing for an alliance with England and that it would yet come to pass.

In those early days, when there was a fresh development in the Ruhr, our Frau would rush in to me at my writing, crying, "Oh, Madame, have you heard . . . ?" That ceased in time, perhaps because I would not say anything against the French ; but when a dumb patience took the place of excitement one began to feel a greater admiration for this people waiting with patience and dignity till the good sense and good feeling of the world should decide the matter. Once, when we had been planning a few days at Godesberg on the Rhine and one of us said that the French had imposed a curfew at Godesberg, our Frau, who was in the room, said quickly, "Not for you, Madame, only for the Germans."

I don't know why that should have touched me to the quick.

We had a free American staying with us through January and February who did not see why the French should tie her up anyhow. We had been

advised not to go outside the British Occupied Area, since there might be incidents. A good many of the 8000 civilians who were a bugbear to the Army had pulled up their tent-pegs and gone, although still unaware in all probability that the Army took no responsibility for their safety. There had been alarmist rumours that the rest of us were to be ready to go at seven hours' notice, but the notice never came. We had discussed the matter with young officers who thought it would be a terrible business to move those eight thousand untrained, undisciplined people if it had to be done in a hurry. It was during these conversations that we learned the horrid truth, condemned and deplored by the young officers, that no one was responsible for our safety except the British Consul and his two assistants; and, as Pamela said, what was that among so many. However, we stayed to see what would happen, even though the British Raj did not throw its cloak over us.

Our American friend was embarrassing in her ideas of freedom. She had just missed the American Occupation else she would have gone to Coblenz and had a good time with the boys. It was she who dragged us, despite the warnings, to Königswinter; within a day or two of its being occupied by the French.

Königswinter was old Unoccupied territory, and British officers had been arrested there by the German Police for appearing in uniform. But all

life is chances, as a Dublin policeman said to a young friend of mine whom he found dodging the moon in curfew hours, so we chanced Königswinter, not even bothering to bring our passports.

We were abundantly justified. It is surprising how often a War Zone is a Peace Zone to those living in it. Königswinter was as quiet as ever, at the foot of the Seven Mountains, in its Winter sleep. The only interesting experience was when we passed a customs frontier at Bueul and the young French soldiers who were acting, I am sure unwillingly as *douaniers*, came to inspect the belongings of the passengers. It began with an old fat German who got out with a bag. He was apparently called upon to halt, but he went off as though he had not heard, while the tram rocked with laughter, and the young soldiers, after an embarrassed consultation, allowed him to depart.

There was a village humorist in the tram, a very old gentleman with a cackling laugh. I am sure his humour was of a good brand, judging by the laughter of the people about him. The young soldiers came in pink to the ears, painfully aware of the mockery of the girls. They did not even pretend to make an examination, but scurried through the tram like rabbits and hid their heads in the little station-house to the sounds of mocking laughter.

It seemed a shame to put decent boys in the position of being hated.

I often wondered how the French felt about it.

Into Bonn one day when we were there, came a weary column of French soldiers covered with dust and obviously very tired. Everyone stood and stared at them as they trudged heavily on their way. Train-loads of them used to go over the railway-bridge close by our flat and the people in the streets would stand and look up at them. They walked about singly or in couples through the Cologne streets. The Belgians too were there: you found them standing beside you gazing at a shop-window; they came into the restaurants and public places. I have an impression that the Belgian is a more intolerant conqueror than the French. He has a braggadocio. Of course, he has much to remember.

Not once but many times we saw the strange spectacle of a French soldier being directed on his way by a German policeman. The German police are beautiful to look at as they sit their horses, their cloaks spread wide to cover the crupper; they have a monumental dignity and beauty. All uniformed men in Germany have a protecting, a caressing air with them. The tram-conductors in Cologne, the taxi-men, have a way of helping you in and out of their conveyances as though you were a most precious person. '*Ach . . . so!*' says a German, with a great laugh and a protecting arm when you have collided with him, or he with you, and steadies you affectionately.

The manner of the policeman as he indicated to

the French soldier his right way, leaning from his horse, a hand on the enemy shoulder was benignity itself. Once there were two to be guided. The second was a Senegalese, black as your hat. His round black eyes, showing all the whites, goggled in a stare at the beautiful, benign protector of the lost. What a picture it would have made.

Again as we came home through the streets where there was a procession from St. Ursula's, tossing all its lanterns in the windy dark like so many tempest-blown stars, we saw the French soldiers walking with girls not of their own nationality. One girl walked between two soldiers—I fear that many Rhineland young ladies cannot resist the conqueror.

Once, at Godesberg, while the tram waited, a young lady suddenly sprang from her seat, rushed out and we were spectators of an animated love-scene between her and a French *sous-officier*. Obviously, they had quarrelled on some other occasion: he was implacable: she pleaded: he softened: they embraced, the bell rang: the young lady caught her tram. The last thing we saw was the Frenchman holding up five fingers of one hand and two of the other. They were to meet at seven o'clock obviously. So Love laughs at international hatreds!

Not knowing what lies behind the inscrutable faces of the German men as they looked on at such things we wondered. We had heard of University

students who cut off the long fair plaits of these Gretchens, but on the whole they seemed to be not a penny the worse.

Perhaps the incident at Godesberg was responsible for the incivility of an old fellow-traveller who obviously hated us. He was the sixth man we met in Germany who did—three in the train coming from Hamburg: two in the train to Luxembourg and the old gentleman of the Godesberg tram. Now I come to think of it only two hated us in the Hamburg train. His determination, on a very hot day, to keep doors and windows shut drove us all out on to the conductor's platform, where the very agreeable young man broke all the rules by allowing us to keep the door open—strictly forbidden on the long-distance trams. The Rhinelander has a susceptible heart.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE SHADOW

ONE of those days my Frau brought me a harrowing story. An old professor had visited a distinguished doctor in the town, an old friend of his. We learnt later that the professor was a Doctor of Music and a famous person in his art. He lived, with a daughter who was devoted to him, lost in a world of music and his dreams, very seldom coming awake to the hard and bitter realities of life in Germany after the War.

He had come to Dr. Apfel in one of his moments of waking. He had, he said, enough money to keep him alive for a fortnight. After that he wanted the doctor to give him something to put him asleep.

It was one of the frantic moments of the downward rushing of the mark before people had grown used to it and had learned to accept the calamity with the stoicism of despair.

"They are opening the gas in Berlin," Pamela's dentist had said, raving at the French and the English and the world in general, while he handled his instruments, she said, as though they were musical instruments and treated her as though pain was not.

They were opening the gas in Berlin. In Cologne

where the old are pious Catholics and carry their burdens to the churches it was not so simple a matter. But the old Doctor of Music wanted to be put asleep. He was quite unaware that his money had gone long ago, and that his friends and admirers were keeping him alive. He would forget this sudden waking up and go asleep again with his music and his dreams, if he could be distracted for the moment.

"I will not put you asleep," Dr. Apfel said. "When the fortnight is over I will share with you. I have plenty for both."

"I will not take another man's food," said the old Doctor of Music. "When the fortnight is over you will be kind. You will give me sleep. I will not die hungry."

I told this harrowing tale in a London newspaper and a few days later I received an S.O.S. letter from a good Englishman, a Fellow of an Oxford College, who had fought in the War, imploring me to keep the old man alive till he could send him money. He had marked it "Urgent": but the German Post-Office is very leisurely, and in these days of the Ruhr invasion it was hampered in its methods of work, so the letter took several days to reach me.

I wrote to Dr. Apfel to get the facts for my good Englishman as the story had reached me indirectly, and a few days later I went to see him.

He was a little old man, looking much older than his seventy and odd years of life, just such an old man as you might see in the picture of "The Alchemist,"

sitting by a table with crucibles and retorts upon it, a skull and such uncanny things hanging from the ceiling. He is a Jew, and I suppose Jews age early, and I am sure Germans do, because of the shut window and the central heating: but at his elbow stood his son ready to interpret, one of the very young-looking Jews, sleek, warmly coloured, with an Oriental smoothness of skin and brightness of eye; quite another type of Jew from the hook-nosed, dingy fraternity. The Jews as a people show very distinct types. Mr. Apfel is not many years short of forty. He looked, probably, just the same age at sixteen.

Curiously enough, Dr. Apfel had not the English which is almost universal in Germany and so fluent and without accent that one has asked sometimes if the speaker was not English. I asked the question the other day of a charming young lady in a shop, who rounded off her excellent English sentences with "Right O!" It was pathetic that "Right O!" the absurd finishing touch to the easy English.

Mr. Apfel stood by his father's chair and translated. The room had the fusty, shabby look of professional rooms in Germany in these days. The old man sat fingering his charts as though he was playing at a game of cards in which the issue was Life or Death. Everything in the room seemed dusty.

"My father wishes to read to you from his charts," said the son in the slow, monotonous voice of one who speaks a language not his own. "He is a woman's doctor. In these days he gets many of his patients

who suffer in the same way. When the fat disappears from the interior of the body the organs drop. When my father has a new patient he first takes her weight. He wishes to tell you what is on the charts. I will read two or three."

He read. "The weight—of grown women—averaged about 85 pounds and the normal healthy weight is 140 pounds."

He handed back the charts to his father, who kept looking from us to his son; the latter occasionally consulting him in German, translating.

"How do the people live who had an income of 10,000 or 12,000 marks before the War?"

It is the question we were always asking, to which we had received no satisfactory response.

"They do not live: they die. When the food is all gone they creep away into corners like animals. It is no one's affair." Mr. Apfel shrugs his shoulders expressively. "They die of natural causes—starvation."

When he said that I remembered that at the morning Mass at St. Ursula's—one church of seventy-three—there was nearly always a coffin on the draped catafalque before the altar; the Mass was nearly always a Mass for the Dead.

"It is not charity we need," said Mr. Apfel. "Charity is very good—for the charitable—but it keeps only one or two alive! We want to be allowed to get on to our feet, to trade with the world. Then Germany will save herself. We want improved

conditions of living. The children are tuberculous and rickety."

I asked him if the rich Germans helped. I had heard it said that the rich Germans could have saved Germany if they would. There was the accusation that they had sent their money out of Germany during the War.

Again Mr. Apfel consulted his father. I heard the word *Schieber*, which is used for the profiteer. I used to think it was *Sheba* and that it was connected with the Jews.

He turned back to me :

"My father says that they have given so much, the rich of Cologne, that he will not ask them for any more."

Apparently Dr. Apfel was something of a distributing agent for the charitable.

"That is very good," said Mr. Apfel, "but charity is nothing. We want to be allowed to trade."

"The Universities are hard hit," I ventured.

"Yes, they are hard hit. The students—they are not to be pitied. They have learnt to work with their hands. In the vacations they work on the railways, on the farms. That is all to the good. It is the old and the women and the children who are to be pitied."

The old doctor spoke again and his son interpreted.

"He asks—do you know that the people look on the English as their protectors. The hearts of the people beat in the street when they hear the sound

of the English music lest the English should be going."

I had no very definite idea of what Mr. Apfel looked like—he had stood all the time with his back to the window, his face in shadow—till he came to see me a few days later. Then with the light on his face I saw how smooth and unlined it was, how it had a downy look like a peach. It is one type of Jew, the type that does not age quickly. Those I have known of this type have been artists or intellectual men. Nothing could be more unlike the Shylock type, the type of the International Jew, the ugly, bent, terribly old plutocrats one had seen in the big hotels or travelling by *train de luxe* before the War.

Mr. Apfel had served on the Salonika Front during the War. He was on the listening post, picking up English conversation by the Morse code. He had something of the mind of Siegfried Sassoon about the War. He had gone in as a private soldier, and I imagine that his great command of English had made him valuable enough for his heterodox opinions to pass without official notice, or perhaps he kept them to himself. From another German soldier I had heard just the same bitterness one heard from soldiers at home about the War—the obverse side of the medal. Mr. Apfel was left at the listening post pretty well all the time. Very seldom did an officer come to that post of danger.

(It was strange to think that he might have been picking up Toby's talk on the Salonika Front.)

My other German officer said that the Prussian officers of the old Army were cruel and despotic. Their pay was very little; they were poor and very proud, and they exacted an excessive consideration from those they looked upon as their inferiors. All they asked was conceded to them from fear. When they were killed in the War they were replaced by quite a different class of men, intellectual, educated men of the learned professions. Some of them tried a more human way with the rank and file. They were removed or degraded or they were sent to dangerous posts where they were killed. Once in the retreat when the men came upon an Officers' Club they found it stocked with food and wines. "We—we had nothing," said my German officer. He too had fought on the Salonika Front, with the Bulgars, who hated the German officers for their cruel despotism. He went off into a vivid description of a retreat of Bulgars, an army of nearly 400,000 men in flight along a wide road, the British, French and Italians hot in pursuit.

Mr. Apfel is a business man. He is a wholesale stationer and printer. That first day he came to see me he presented us each with a pencil as a souvenir. It was a little act of graciousness, of which he had a double share, that of the refined and educated Jew, and that of the Rhinelander.

He told us of his beginnings in business. Somehow he had the art of telling a very simple tale in such a way and with such detail that it all lived for you. It

reminded me of a time when, buried in the country, I had no book to fall back upon but Zola's *Paradis des Dames*—I should not read Zola for choice and I found his human drama intolerably squalid. But I recognised the man's genius as the slow detail was built up and the great shop talked, every reel of cotton, every length of ribbon, the chopping scissors of the shopman, the rolling of the little balls that carried the money on overhead rails to the cash-desks, everything. He thought he was going to chuck the business he had built up: he had an unprogressive partner.

"I shall lose," he said. "One hundred pounds? Would that be a great deal to you? No: not very much?"

He had a way of anticipating your answer, and a simplicity that was charming taken in conjunction with his extraordinary intelligence.

I asked him about the child-suicide which used to be such a tragic feature of German life—a terrible tribute to the pre-War passion for efficiency in Germany. He explained it to me.

"Now," he said, "there is not the same fear of parents or schoolmasters. The children are better educated than their parents and they know it. They have thrown off the yoke."

I imagine that the young of adult age have thrown off more than the parental yoke. The Rhineland churches are crowded with the children, the middle-aged and the old: any young there, are of the

middle-class. There is a distressing absence of the working-class young men and girls.

German childhood, he said, once it had come to the age of competition, had been terribly sad. Now the children had rebelled: they had thrown off the yoke. They would submit no more to the severities of father or schoolmaster. He recalled a time when he used to go to school padded within his clothes by his mother against the punishments to come. One remembered the saying: "Since God could not be everywhere He made mothers." So there was always the mother.

But even now there was no rebellion against work. Childhood ceased early in Germany and work began. They were not allowed to be young, Mr. Apfel said: they must be pushed into the workshops and the factories. There was a rule of work in Germany. Stinnes, Thyssen and the others all worked, though they were rich men. They had the habit of work; they could not live without it.

I thought that in all these observations there was nothing very new. In England and in Ireland there were the tyrannical fathers and schoolmasters—and there had been the emancipation of youth which came easily and naturally when it came, for tyranny is a thing which often only needs to be resisted to vanish, created as it is by fear. The tyranny was a convention founded largely, I think, upon the Old Testament, and it is an appetite which grows with satisfaction. I imagine a great many male parents,

after the first shock of surprise, must have been vastly relieved when they could behave as human beings in their family-circle.

Mr. Apfel's intelligence was remarkable and the education of his mind. He had accumulated before the War a library of about four thousand volumes in which England was largely represented. Since the War the library had been at a standstill. He had stopped before he got his set of Dickens, which he has it in his mind to possess. He has many English authors, including full sets of George Bernard Shaw and Oscar Wilde. It was odd to find oneself discussing *Cashel Byron's Profession*, of which he had a great appreciation, with this militant pacifist.

Mr. Apfel's way of acquiring expert knowledge was this :

"Kipling . . . he is highly thought of ? Not a writer for boys ? No ? Though he has written about boys. Nor for children ? Though the *Jungle Book* is very fine."

You instruct him then on the estimation in which Kipling is held as a writer, while his large, round bright eyes regard you with a concentrated interest. He is taking in all you say. He notes the names of the books you mention. He will possess himself of them one day.

"Rider Haggard. He then is a writer for boys ? Not a valuable writer like Kipling, but very good for boys."

And so on. Mr. Apfel discovers minute changes in the disposition of our furniture.

"So! You have changed that table with the books from the middle of the room into the corner. It is an improvement."

He explains the loss of religion among the young men and women of the Rhineland.

"There is nowhere the Catholic Church is so strong as here. When the War came the Catholic Church told the people they would win the War because God was with them. Germany lost the War, so the people do not believe any more."

He has a queer unwilling admiration for the Church. Of her attitude towards mixed marriages—he himself is a Jew married to a Catholic—he said: "The Church is very wise. When she does not like anything she resists to the last step. When it is done without her consent she says no more. She will not lose anyone."

He has a little boy of five who, he says, will not suffer as his father suffered. "I am trying to win his friendship now," he says, "so that I shall have it when he is grown up. I do not punish him. . . ."

He went on to tell a story of how the young gentleman went off on his own to visit another young gentleman of five years old, causing intense anxiety in the hearts of his parents when his absence was discovered. He turned up safe and sound and no fuss was made about the matter. They are exhilarating, those adventurous children of the Cologne streets.

CHAPTER XIX

NIDEGGEN

AFTER a little while the rumours and panics died down and it was as though the French always had been in the Ruhr and always would be. The gatherings of groups of men in the streets obviously discussing the latest news from the Ruhr became less noticeable. Now and again, little posters appeared on the walls mysteriously, to be torn down by the police. They usually appeared on Sunday morning, when presumably the police were less active. No one knew whence they came or who had posted them up. They came like mushrooms in the night. They were anti-French propaganda, of course.

There was always a crowd about the windows of the *Kölnischer Zeitung* or other places where photographs of events in the Ruhr were being shown. Now and again, in a sermon one caught a few impassioned words: "In this the darkest hour that has ever befallen you." And again: "They can take earth away from you but they cannot take Heaven."

Being reassured that the English Occupation was not to cease and the French be in Cologne the people

went back to their normal life. So quiet was everything that one could hardly believe in the Occupation of the Ruhr and the things that were happening there and therefrom. People kept saying that something must happen ; a crisis must come ; but nothing happened. The French and Belgian soldiers, accompanied sometimes by their families, still moved about as though nothing had happened. The people showed a strange monumental patience and discipline.

"And we have been so quiet, we have been so quiet," moaned our Frau one day.

Yes, they had been very quiet. An Army of Occupation at the best is an ill thing to bear with.

One night Pamela came home from a dance in a French military car, bristling with rifles, the driver wearing his tin hat, the officers likewise in full military array. It was at one of the early bitter moments when something or other had happened—the arrest of the Ruhr magnates, perhaps. She said it was weird driving through the silent streets. Once they ran along by a trench in which men were working at the drains or gas or something else. The men drew themselves up by the hands over the edge of the trench to gaze after the invaders but there was no hostile demonstration. She only caught a glimpse of the pale begrimed faces in the light of the flares. One of the French officers saw her safely up the dark, high stairs to our own door. She wondered what would have happened if a German had lurked in the dark corners of the lit staircase.

Nothing would have happened. The Germans are a sane and a strong people, and their patience all but endless. They know that assassination is a weapon which turns against the assassin.

One of those days we sat in a smart hat-shop waiting to be attended to. Lying on a table before us was a telegram from a Thyssen lady asking that a number of hats should be sent to her for selection. It took all our innate honesty to resist the temptation of purloining that telegram : it would have been such an interesting souvenir.

The Rhine, up and down which the barges, linked together, used to be borne on a swift current, was now lined along its banks with a long procession of boats and barges idle, with black smokeless funnels. Still the Dutch boats sailed to Coblenz and Wiesbaden, but the German boats lay idle, many of them coal barges with a full cargo. Some of them bore painted on their sides the name *Hugo Stinnes*, leaping at you white on a black background as though a streak of lightning crossed the sky.

Once as we went down the Rhine towards the Bridge of Boats by which one crossed to Mulheim, in the gathering twilight of a January day we suddenly heard the "Marseillaise" peal out magnificently from a military band. The slow German heads were turned the way it came. It was from the Alexandria Barracks at Riehl where some distinguished French person was being entertained.

All that place is full of ghosts and memories. Across

the hedge of boats, going by the Rhine banks from Mulheim toward Dusseldorf, one comes to Levecusen, now a dye-works, formerly the biggest manufactory of poison-gas in Germany. After the Armistice Pat used to go there on Fridays for money to pay the men, so we had to go over that track too. Beyond the Hohenzollern Bridge hangs the Suspension Bridge built by the labour of British prisoners, which was to have been opened by the Kaiser in person in June, 1918, and named the Victory Bridge. The tide had begun to turn by that time and it never received its baptism. If you spoke of that bridge to a friendly German he or she would look embarrassed.

I think I have mentioned elsewhere the little honour in which the Kaiser is now held in Germany. The scorn of our Frau when it was reported that the Stork had flown over Doorn without stopping was eloquent; yet she had been an Imperialist when we came.

Our Irish-American friend threw a little light on how the Kaiser legend grew. She asked a German cook in her employment why the Germans were so devoted to the Kaiser. She replied: "In my childhood in Germany we were taught to look upon him as a loving father. On his birthday every child in the school received a cake tied with ribbons and inscribed 'From the Emperor.' Of course, we all believed it was sent by his own hand. In such ways we learnt to love him."

That same Irish-American lady was the occasion

once or twice of an unfriendly attitude on the part of a shopkeeper. She was dark and *petite*, and having been at school in France and being French in temperament, as so many Irish women are, she had a way of uttering a French exclamation or bursting into French when her German failed. A chilly indisposition to serve us was the result, but only in one or two instances.

Certainly the entry of the French—especially when they began to occupy outside the already occupied Territory—docked us of many amenities. All the expeditions we had been saving up for Spring and the long days had to be abandoned or undertaken in defiance of advice to the contrary. Bolder travellers took the risk and went off to the Hartz or the Austrian or Bavarian Tyrol or to Switzerland, travelling, of course, by international trains. I never heard of any ill results beyond that they were occasionally treated with suspicion on the German trams and in German towns till they proved that they were not French, when the unfriendliness vanished. But once the French had begun to turn out the railwaymen the trouble began. There were all sorts of stories told of the *Régie* trains. It was said that a train had arrived at Cologne one day with a French driver: it had no brakes.

Someone who had come from a station down Coblenz way had another story to tell. He had arrived at the station to find a train there, the engine-driver leaning against the engine, evidently with no inten-

tion of proceeding. While he looked there came up a French officer, who ordered the man to go on. He spat; answering "*Je ne m'en fiche!*" and followed it up with an outburst of profanity. He was not going to drive a train without brakes.

There began to be alarmist rumours about food since the supplies could not reach the town. Vegetables were scarce and eggs ceased to be fresh. Cologne is not concerned with milk.

The people began to put the blame for everything upon the French. When the cold and wet April and May were followed by an East Wind June they said: "It was not so before the French came. We shall have no Summer this year." And in that they spoke only too truly. 1923 was a Wintry Summer, with a fortnight's heat-wave in July.

At the end of March there was a burst of beautiful weather. By that time many of the places we knew as havens of green peace and full of the singing of birds were occupied by the French. Overath and Königswinter and many other places. To think of all the quiet orchard country in the hands of an enemy occupation was a grief. All around the town beyond the factory chimneys lies real country, exquisite country with the groups of cottages set everywhere in the greenwood. One did not like to think of such places being terrorised.

When we went down to Königswinter we saw no sign of the Occupation beyond a negro sitting in front of a *café* drinking beer. He was not a nice sign.

About Easter we went to Nideggen in the Eifel. There was a party of seven women, which gave us courage. The Occupation goes to the Eifel for week-ends in its numbers, but it goes by motor. We had to go by train.

At the booking-office at Cologne, when we asked for tickets for Düren, the booking-clerk threw up his hands expressively. He could only send us as far as Buer. After that it was French Occupation and the French had taken over the trains.

However, we found a train for Brussels to convey us to Düren, the nearest we could get by train to Nideggen, since the French could not be bothered with all the trains that are trams at intervals, crawling uphill and through quiet valleys, ringing their sheep-bells, so the Eifel villages were isolated except by road.

At Buer the French took over and we saw the very last British R.T.O., a young man of the 60th Rifles, wandering about the platform, quite unaware that he was a sign and a symbol, that he held the peace of Europe in the hollow of his innocent hands. He was, I was told, perpetually holding the scales between the French and the German railway officials, always adjudicating upon questions of trespass and authority. He looked very young and smooth-faced for all that responsibility. It is wonderful how England takes the chances, holding Europe with a corporal's guard, trusting great issues to a little boy just out from Sandhurst, and winning through all the time!

We had at Buer our last hilarious encounter with a young German railway-official about somebody's ticket, over which everyone laughed, bringing a highly amused German spectator at the show to hang from another train window, broadly grinning.

At Buer we saw the French take over our train. It was worth a good long journey just to see the benevolent interest with which the German railwaymen coached them.

There may be, presumably is, an enmity, but, upon my word, one did not always see it. The German at his best, and I take him to be at his best as a skilled and disciplined workman, has a fatherly, a brotherly way with him even for the hereditary enemy. The German railwaymen had the air of patiently instructing willing but very inexperienced pupils.

After we had got out of Buer, a little way along the line, the train came to a standstill with a great creaking and groaning. It was not sabotage: it was only that the engine had something amiss with her to a French driver. A French *sous-officier* walked round the engine prodding her with a pencil, as though to get at the root of the mischief. French and Germans were again in consultation.

Düren station had a strange air of desolation. From end to end of the long platforms there was not a sign of traffic of any kind. Not a creature was to be seen beyond the French soldiers, most of them coloured men. Obviously, no sweeping or cleaning

had been done since the French took over. Everything was foul. The contrast, after the incessantly washing and sweeping Germans, added to the dreariness.

An amiable young Frenchman, our fellow-traveller, helped us out with our luggage and nearly lost his train. The Cologne-Brussels Express did not give us two minutes to clear, so we were not prepared for the desolation. At last, with our luggage about us, we turned and faced three amazed French *sous-officiers*. It was as though we had dropped into a military barracks or a strictly enclosed monastery.

It was evidently a quite unusual experience for seven women, four of them young, to drop from an express train going through Düren. Düren was, for the moment, the end of the railway system. Only privileged Allied trains rushed past it to Brussels and Paris and Calais.

From Düren station radiated away a whole network of little lines which normally carried happy passengers away into the heavenly stretch of mountainous country known as the Eifel. The little trains travelled about as fast as a lamb or a child, and the tinkling of the little bell was harmonious with the songs of the birds and the chattering of the amber brooks running down all the hill-sides to make an innocent stream in the valley. The whole Eifel country was isolated.

The French *sous-officiers* were obviously anxious that we should go on our way. Obviously, they

did not want us there. Nideggen!—but it was fourteen kilometres! With *tous ces bagages*! We should have to sleep at Düren! After that, they forgot all about us, not even helping us to carry our luggage when it had to be carried.

Two of us went forth to look for vehicles to take us to Nideggen. The others carried the *bagages* and piled it about a seat to wait. It was very cold, and I wish to see nothing more dreary than Düren station on that April afternoon. One thought of the German *Hausfrau*, of the buckets of water with which she drenches the pavements of Cologne on a Saturday, even in wet weather, which she flings valorously against her house-walls. Our Allies passed us by—mainly Algerians, one a Senegalese negro. We might not have been there for them. They grew accustomed to the spectacle of our waiting. We thanked Heaven for the long bright afternoon. We felt in the War-zone, and not being acquainted with Düren, I, at least, thought of it as a cowed village, not as the considerable town it is.

Of course, our Allies had commandeered all the motors. It was a long, long time before our messengers came back, nearly two hours by the clock. And all that time there was not a sign of life except for the grey-blue uniforms passing and re-passing.

At last there came in a smiling coachman in livery, just such a one as you might get from the "Bull" or the "Rose and Crown" in an English town, only much more smiling. With him came a willing

assistant of twelve years old. All the *bagages* was seized upon by their kindly and efficient hands. It was civilisation; it was the normal. Outside waited two comfortable vehicles, each with a pair of horses, old English Army horses. These were more fortunate than the English horses scattered all over the Continent often are. One does not like to think of the Army horses sold to the Greeks, very much to the grief of those with whom they had shared the battle. I remember the tribute of a young officer to the horses in the battle. "They are so noble," he wrote. "The mules kicked and squealed and threw over everything. The horses just bore it, trembling, their great eyes full of suffering, but with a more than human dignity."

And they were sold to the Greeks!

These horses were evidently pets. They were thin, but they were not cowed, and the drivers halted and we all walked up when the hill was steep. It was on one of those pauses that the driver and his little boy lifted up the horses' feet to show us the military number not yet wholly obliterated. The horses were fortunate that became German horses and not Greek.

The first wildfire of Spring was on all the bushes the day we went to Nideggen. It was a grey day with no hint of the blackthorn Winter that was to come. The approach to Nideggen up the long winding hill was just moderately beautiful, manna and honey to us who had not seen real country

except in the briefest snatches for many months. After Düren had been left behind, and Düren too had a dusty, neglected air as though energy had gone out of the people, we saw little evidence of the new Occupation till we came upon a French camp and wireless station on the hillside.

The *poilus* came out and kissed their hands to the girls, but beyond that allowed us to proceed in peace. It was not till we had climbed the last little steep hill and were in the long village street of Nideggen that we were aware of the beauty we had come to.

The street was closed in by a castellated gateway at either end. All its cobble-stones and house-fronts were exquisitely clean and shining. When there was rain the cobbles shone like polished marble and agate and chalcedony. The "Heilighof"—we thought at first it was the "Holy Hotel" but Heilige was only the family-name of the proprietor—was a village inn that did not in the least mar the beauty of the village but rather added to it, a long low white house, with green outside shutters and shrubs in green tubs either side of the doorway.

Within it had a real country feeling. It was beautifully clean and sweet-smelling. You climbed to your bedroom by steep flights of narrow steps; and there was not a bit of furniture in the low country bedrooms that you might not have bought in a little country town. It had an extreme simplicity and the whole service had an excellent efficiency as

well. There was a delightfully benevolent waiter, ever ready to laugh with us at our blundering German, laughter to which we have grown accustomed. There was Frau Heilege, one of the large, placid, shy German women, with two tall young sons who had a slight knowledge of English, and there were the smiling chambermaids. There were also the dogs, a beautiful Schafferhund and a little prick-eared toy-terrier who went where they would, upstairs, downstairs, in my lady's chamber.

There was a beautiful garden at the back of the "Heilighof" where the lilac and laburnum were just coming into bloom. It would have been wonderful later on, but when we came there was just the first light leafage on the trees and the birds were all singing. It was quite a different climate from what we had known on the plains. People in Cologne had warned us to be sure to take warm clothing to the Eifel as we should find it very cold. They had reason. For Pamela and myself, our first rejoicing that the luck had fallen to us of having the only bedroom in the house without central heating, we being sworn enemies of that system, was tempered a little as the days went on and the bright bitter East blew.

It was lovely in the garden where one could cheat the East, having tea out-of-doors by a wall below which the valley fell steeply; across it a beautiful blue wall of hill. Our bedroom had a little covered green balcony outside its French window. The

balcony was hardly more than four feet from the ground.

Having lived for some months a-top of Outer Cologne Railway Station where all the shunting is done, we had anticipated the quiet of the country nights. Alas, the first night one of us remembered the black troops and the easiness of ascending our balcony, and kept remembering it all through the week. The other missed the friendly screaming of the trains that left off at 1 a.m. and began again at 4 a.m., and the lights of the station. The deep silence in which the lightest sound in the house could be heard; there was something that made a noise all night as though someone raked out a furnace-fire, the heating apparatus probably, right below my bed; it frightened me as though I had been a slum child in the silence and darkness of the country night for the first time.

I don't think we slept very well in that green peace. We had to come back to the lullaby of Outer Cologne Station and all its trains for sleep. But, oh, the Eifel was lovely! Such deep valleys, such lovely hills, such coppices, where the sap ran in the trees and there was a delicious smell of sun-baked pines, for there was a hot sun with the East Wind! lovely villages everywhere, and streams in the valleys.

The solitude was something that could be felt. Apparently the villagers kept to the villages, for we seldom met anyone on the roads. Mr. Apfel had

told us: "The men of the Eifel are dark and sad. They have perpetually a fight with nature to wring a living from those rocky hillsides. They keep their thoughts to themselves. You will not find them as the people of Cologne."

One understood what he meant, becoming acquainted with the valleys and hillsides. They have laid the earth upon the rock as the people of Donegal and Connaught have laid it. The silence of the valleys is eerie, was eerie in the first green of the Spring, even when one was companioned.

One late afternoon we went down a deep valley. At the bottom of it was a little river flowing almost out of sight and by the edge of the river was a solitary cottage, to which a deep flight of steps descended. There was not a sign of life about the cottage. One could hear the stream, a faint sluggish murmur, and high on the hill-side a frightened bird twittered.

Not another sound. At home the valley would have been full of the bleating of sheep. The cottage had a sinister look down there in the valley. The road wound round the hills to other valleys. One wanted to get back to the friendly uplands.

While we considered turning back there came two sounds, one of a man digging. We located him on the face of the hill opposite, high up. Judging by the sound his spade struck the rock every time. The other was the sound of footsteps echoed from all the hills.

It was quite a long time before the owner of the feet came in view—a strange old man, wrapped in a cloak to his feet, who passed us in silence, apparently unaware of us. Germany is full of people like him—queer old long-haired, bearded men, like prophets, like John the Baptist, walking with a detached air through the shopping crowds on the Hohestrasse as though the Eifel. It is a romantic country.

I do not think that for any reward or consideration I would have walked through that valley alone, even by daylight. Such places are haunted by the spirits of wood and water, the earth and the hill.

On the Sunday at Nideggen the village and the surrounding country were visited by the French from the wireless station and camp, many of them joy-riding on military horses. They hardly disturbed the peace of the village, buying post-cards at the village shop and drinking a *petit verre* at the baker's shop before going down again into the valley. Nideggen was one of those places where it is extremely difficult to buy anything beyond post-cards, the wants of the people being supplied from Düren in so far as the village is not self-supporting. Anything you could buy beyond post-cards you found in unexpected places. A lemon was not procurable in all Nideggen, nor, indeed, any other fruit.

Low Sunday was a day of piercing cold. It was a First Communion Sunday, and we had to choose between two Masses, one at 6.30, a Low Mass, the other at eight for the First Communicants was im-

mensely long, we were told. We chose the "immensely long" Mass, but I shall not forget the piercing cold of the tightly-packed church, all stone and marble, high on its hill in the very teeth of the North Wind. Whenever the door was opened to admit a new-comer the icy blast found one out.

The poor little First Communicants must have been blue in their white muslin frocks, but I did not get to see them although I had been assured that the sight was *sehr schön*, since I was packed among the standing men at the end of the church with the alternative of sitting on the kneeling board in the icy draught that ran along the floor, or taking one of the stone steps to the pulpit which was kindly left vacant for me. I was very much struck by the men—they were such fine broad-shouldered fellows, so well and comfortably dressed, and all looking so thoroughly respectable. One marvelled too at the fine church in a small village like Nideggen, with such poor land round about it. Every village in the Rhineland has its fine church.

The first faint green shivered on the trees. The lilac and the other flowering trees and shrubs thought twice about coming out and rolled themselves up again for their Winter sleep. It was Blackthorn Winter with a vengeance when we left the Heilighof on the Monday morning, hearing while we waited in the hall for our conveyances a report over the telephone that it was snowing like blazes in Cologne.

We were divided between two motor-cars as we

ran down the hill to Düren, the first containing the mothers of the party, the second the girls. The mothers were allowed to pass by the group of *poilus* standing about the entrance to the camp, but the young ladies were halted, the chauffeur being brought to a standstill unceremoniously by half a dozen rifles pointed at him. Fortunately the mothers were quite unaware of what was happening to the other car.

At first, the girls suspected an intention of commandeering the car, but if the intention was there it was put aside, and the *poilus* fell in most amiably with the desire, expressed by the girl who had a camera, to photograph them. They tumbled to it in fact most enthusiastically, once they understood what was wanted of them. One, who was a bugler, fled in search of his bugle, pursued by the young lady who wanted to pose him and suspected an intention of flight. The others were delighted to pose and submitted to be pushed hither and thither by the indomitable photographer, so that the photograph should include them all. In the result the young ladies were photographed with the French soldiers, which was exactly what they wanted so as to impress their friends at home. They parted from the sweet enemy with many courtesies on both sides. Everyone was pleased except the German chauffeur, who had watched these civilities with a lowering eye: he drove at such a speed when well out of sight of the French soldiers that the young ladies gave themselves up for lost.

At Düren Station there was more photography. A really charming young French soldier, who certainly had not the *cafard*, assisted the photographer to get a group of the coloured men, who, being Mahomedans, were extremely reluctant to pose. He persuaded them with a brotherly arm about their shoulders as though there was no such thing as a colour-bar. He only succeeded partially as they kept their heads turned away, but there was another one added to the photographic souvenirs.

As for the young soldier he was delightful. The French soldier in Occupied Territory can be many things. He can wear a look, as he walks among the Germans, as keen as a sword. No one can look the soldier as the Frenchman can. On the other hand, in his working-garments, so to speak, he can inspire one with terror. There is such an air of *Vae Victis!* about him.

This boy was of neither type. He was not at all the ordinary *poilu*. He was a student at the Geographical College at Versailles. He had been three weeks in the Ruhr mines "down the shaft" making plans of the mines, and he was on his way back to France, very glad to be out of the Ruhr and Germany. Obviously his English had been acquired in Paris.

He apologised with easy good manners, for his grimy condition. He was glad to be going home. The Germans were a kind people, but as things were one had to be on the watch. He laughed while he told us that he had been directed to a train for Düssel-

dorf by a German, had fallen asleep, being very tired, and had wakened up in Brussels. He had no resentment for the trick played upon him. That was to be expected. It was quite legitimate that, in War. But he did not like to be hated.

He talked of *mon officier*, and got into it the sound of a loyal devotion which the French can impart to *mon Capitaine—mon Général*. Can any other people in the world so express the sentiment?

There was nothing of the *cafard* about him: he had been too young for the War. He put in all the luggage for us when the train came at last. The *sous-officiers* looked on with a weary aloofness. Perhaps it was a dog's life, as they say, to be in the midst of hatred.

CHAPTER XX

SUMMER

WE left Cologne in June, 1923, not to return, but Cologne knew better than that. Cologne weaves her spells. She is not to be lightly relinquished.

It was a record June for cold. The Sunday before we left was a festival day at St. Ursula's. It remains in my mind as something piteous and beautiful. A dry East wind blew the dust in the streets. It was the Kermesse, the Church Feast of St. Ursula. One awoke to the sound of children in the street below one's windows; children's chatter and laughter and the dragging feet of very little children. These were on their way to the gathering of the procession in the Ursulnplatz.

As we went down the Ritterstrasse we were aware of many banners and draperies of red and gold at a street corner, which revealed themselves as we came nearer as the decorations of an altar. There was a strike of Corporation employees in Cologne just then, and the town, usually so town-proud, had become suddenly dusty and dishevelled. All the garlands from the great procession of Corpus Christi lay in

the streets : there was the dreariness of an uncared-for, an unkempt town.

The wind was keen from the East and it was sunless. There went with us, as we made for the nine o'clock Mass at St. Ursula's, little radiant girls, all in white, wreathed, golden-headed, as though the angels had come to earth again. There they were, white and golden, in the East wind, brightening the dingy street, like troops of the shining ones, to quote Charles Lamb.

Everyone was waiting in the Ursulnplatz for the start of the procession which was but forming. The streets were full of little boys ringing bells, tiny boys, yellow-headed, like a duckling just out of the shell, golden boys and girls from two years upward. I could almost swear there were some younger than that—the younger the sweeter. "The darling people under five" were tremendously in evidence. Down all the streets to the Platz the mothers were guiding their lambs, with a fold of their cloak thrown about the white and gold—for oh, the East was bitter!

The beautiful old Church was all but empty, though there was a blaze of light on the High Altar and every door stood wide. Now came a scarlet beadle : again two or three gentlemen in top hats and frock-coats encircled with the sash of their Guild. They hurried hither and thither : they were to carry the canopy over the Sacred Host.

Out in the streets all the windows in the houses, windows that open in the middle, were being thrown

back. Every window had its altar and its lit candles. There was not a house that did not show reverence to the King of kings. The people were busy dressing their altars. Sometimes it was a stolid German Papa, or a sleek young business man. Everyone was helping; everyone admiring and comparing. The ordinary merchandise was out of the shop-windows. The altar took the place of bottles of wine, of cheese and sausages, of scent and hair-brushes, of the commonplace wares of every day. Still came the white and gold children and the tiny boys ringing bells.

It was touching: it was heavenly: it was the Religion.

In one window which was not open a playful puppy pawed at us through the glass, quite unaware that the window of every day had become an altar. As he tumbled backwards through the curtains, pulling a vase of flowers with him, a hand lifted him gently while another hand restored the vase. You could see the interiors of all the rooms beyond the lit candles on the little altars. Some were very simple, but some had taken a deal of dressing. There was not a window that did not show a light. It was the Religion. The great part of the world might go forgetting, might be evil and full of hatreds: but here was Love; here was Simplicity; here was the Religion.

In the Platz, between the lit houses and the old Church there were, one would have said, myriads of children. The Platz tossed with lilies, for every one

of the little girls carried her sheaf. It was more beautiful than an army with banners, these children carrying their lilies in the sight of Heaven. They were all ages and one would have said all classes. Standing by that lovely flock were the grave wonderful mothers who, despite all the poverty, the privations, of to-day and the black shadow of to-morrow, keep the lambs as they should be kept, clean and beautiful from head to foot. In Cologne a ragged child, or a ragged mother, does not exist. Cleanliness goes hand in hand with godliness. Some of the older children carried banners and others had in their arms gold lambs and golden flowers which must have been very heavy. Now and again a little one would stray out of the ranks and be gently restored. Their heads were wreathed with roses white and pink: and sometimes there was a rose or a blue sash about the tiny figure. It was very cold for them, poor lambs, though the mothers were tireless and kept trying to shelter them before the procession started. The little boys wandered away in a spirit of adventure, ringing their bells down a side-street till someone captured and restored them to their places.

When, at last, the procession started it was as though a field of lilies, snow on snow, moved down the narrow streets.

All the traffic ceased. There was Benediction at the altars which were set up in all the open spaces. The footpaths were crowded with worshippers. Every open doorway was full.

The decaying wreaths and garlands of the Corpus Christi procession from the Dom lay in the uncleansed streets, but as the high golden canopy came by, down went everyone on his or her knees, quite careless of what was knelt upon.

All the parish of St. Ursula's was out of doors and worshipping. The mothers hovered watching their lambs in the white frocks, ill-suited for this strange easterly June. Perhaps they felt that their Shepherd kept them.

Did Saint Ursula see this in her vision, following her martyrdom, a tossing field of lilies with multitudes of children scarce higher than daisies?

Before the War the parishes kept the Kermesse, as the Flemish do, like a fair. Now there is a subdued festivity. After the procession is over friends visit their friends and there is quiet feasting. Never, I think, outside this old town have I so felt the Religion, in the streets, in the air, in the people as in the churches. One would make a long pilgrimage for that, just to feel uplifted, as one constantly feels it about the singing children and the kneeling people and the tossing of lilies. There was always the Religion.

Everyone prophesied us a cold journey. It was a trifle, the unnatural cold weather by the dangers we ran. It was a time when there was sabotage and rumour of sabotage. Cologne had the oddly tranquillising effect on one that one did not bother very much about danger. Arrived at the frontier one

would be safe. We declined sleepers : we preferred to die or be maimed sitting up.

By this time we had almost forgotten that we were civilians. Some members of the Occupation had forgotten also if they had ever remembered, and we had the agreeable experience of having everything done for us, and all arrangements made for our travelling comfort, with the perfect efficiency which belongs to the soldier.

I sallied forth that last afternoon to do some last shopping. One of my errands was to a shop in the Schildergasse, a very good shop for ribbons and laces and such things.

One of the proprietors waited upon me, a young, dapper man whom I suspected to be of the same ancient nation as my friend, Mr. Apfel. An explanation about something I wanted which he had not in stock, due to the French, of course, started him off. He asked me if I had read Austen Chamberlain's speech in the *Times* of Tuesday.

I had been too busy to read it though I get the *Times* every day. Sometimes in those crowded days it had to go unread. He gave me a rapid synopsis of what Mr. Chamberlain had been saying in perfect English with a literary turn to the phrases.

While I bought lace across the counter and he measured out the metres he talked. I have often been sorry that I was too *distract* at that moment of upheaval to be capable of doing my share in the conversation, or to encourage Mr. R——, as I should have done at another moment.

“Germany is at this hour precisely in the condition she was in after the Thirty Years’ War.”

I concealed my ignorance of the condition of Germany after the Thirty Years’ War.

“The mistake the French made was that they thought they were up against the fluid Rhinelanders: they were up against the iron Westphalian.”

“Germany is going out.” I had heard that phrase before. What exactly was meant by it I did not know, or how much was meant. With an eye on the clock I suggested that Prussianised Germany must be a very different place from the old Germany of many little states and rulers, and the people who were responsible for Santa Claus, and the Christmas-tree, the toys and the fairy-tales.

He fixed me with a reproving eye. He was really quite young.

“You English take a Charles Dickens’ view of Germany,” he said. “You must forget that Germany is happier now than she was then. In the Germany of the little states Absolutism reigned unchecked.”

I could imagine what a good hard bout of talk, such talk as my soul loves, I should have had with Mr. R—— if the occasion had been favourable. From many such talks I have come forth in an extraordinary state of well-being, highly exhilarated, the blood coursing through my veins, stepping lightly, in fact only touching the ground in an odd place.

We had said farewell to nearly all our friends.

Duty, not inclination, recalled us to London. We sat among our trunks which were being locked and strapped by some of the friends who stayed with us to the last, while we waited for our last meal in the flat which had been the scene of so many happy gatherings. Then, there came a telegram. The occasion for our going no longer existed. But we had to go, all the same, since we had taken a house at Wimbledon for four months. We had to face alone the dangers of the journey to Aachen: we had to leave a life we were thoroughly enjoying: we had to part with those who would fain have kept us—and the occasion for sacrifice no longer existed.

In three weeks we came back. We had been told that if we went we could not get back, that the Passport Office was refusing passports to the Occupation Area, which was quite true. Our flat was let; we had pulled up our tent-pegs and cut our cables. Yet in three weeks we were back, all difficulties surmounted, and the delightful little house at Wimbledon which should have been ours for four months, sub-let.

Everything had been easy and everyone kind.

We came back on the 30th of June, having departed for ever on the 12th. Our London friends thought we were mad to go back to a place of so many dangers and to a railway journey of so much peril. We knew better. We knew the deep peace of Cologne. We were most kindly taken care of on the journey, and met at the frontier by some of our welcoming friends.

There were no untoward incidents. The Belgians were supposed to be very disagreeable to English-speaking travellers through their territory. We found them positive lambs. The only disagreeable people we had encountered were the Customs officials at Dover and Victoria. When I declared a bottle of eau-de-Cologne at Dover the Customs official, with the air of finding everyone dishonest till it was proved otherwise, sternly commanded me to produce the bottle at Victoria—it had gone on with the registered luggage: the official at Victoria confiscated the bottle with the same air of catching a thief. He might at least have been neutral about it.

Apparently many bad smugglers came from Cologne.

That journey back was a beautiful one, except for the excessive cold, which all but froze us when we nodded asleep in the railway carriage. Cologne opened her arms to us like a long lost mother. We were so glad to get back, that, awaking from our first sleep in our old quarters, we could hardly believe in our luck that we were really back again.

When you visit the Trevi Fountain at Rome you throw a penny into the delicious green, translucent water of the wonderful fountain, so that you may come back again. We had not thrown a penny into any one of the beautiful fountains of Cologne, but we had come back all the same, and that was enough for us.

CHAPTER XXI

MOTHER AUTUMN

ONE of our friends had written to us when we were away: "To-day the mark is at 500,000 and all Cologne has gone mad."

It was the beginning of the end of the mark; 500,000 was soon to be a negligible figure.

There was a heat-wave in July, which constituted the Summer of 1923. When you went into the street the hot air came rising in waves to your face as though you were approaching some great mass of boiling lava. We supported the heat-wave by means of ices every evening at dinner, an ice-cupboard for our food and an electric fan. We had by this time a balcony "garden," that is to say, window-boxes all along the balcony, full of flowers and greenery. We used to sit there of evenings, watching our neighbours in their shirt-sleeves and *décolleté*, reclining in their balconies. Indoors we turned off all lights. It saved our faces, which were fast melting, and gave a delusive feeling of coolness, but a very effective one all the same.

The reckless Rhinelanders trusted Father Rhine, and he too often failed them. All the grassy spaces

along the banks of the Rhine were strewn with recumbent figures day and night. One Sunday afternoon as we came across the Bridge of Boats, returning from a picnic tea in Königsforst, we saw the Rhine full of bobbing heads. That day six were drowned at the Bridge of Boats and eleven at Rodenkirche, where Cologne ends on the road to Bonn. Cologne did not seem greatly concerned about a score of lives, more or less ; she could afford them.

We used to get out of Cologne to the great depths of the Forest or beyond. About half-way through the Forest there is a placard attached to a tree : " Here Ends the British Occupation." Beyond that placard few Germans were bold enough to venture, so we used to have the green haunted spaces to ourselves.

Myriads of people pour out of Cologne on Sundays to all the woods and forests and open spaces, while myriads more crowd the green amenities of Cologne. We used to pity the sweltering tightly-packed masses in the white trams as we rushed by them. For a long way the Forest was full of them ; suddenly there was the French Occupation, and the Forest was empty.

Once we took our taxi past the placard, and bade our driver to wait. He rolled his eyes and held up his hands. Nothing could be more certain than that as soon as the *offiziers* were out of sight the French would, without doubt, slay him. Somehow I did not think that he was nearly as much frightened as he pretended ; but it was a good bit of acting. There

was a certain rich humour in his eyes and expression which reminded me of my own countrymen when they say with a gurgling delight: "Och, thim's the divil's lads!" The *offizier* would perhaps give him a *papier* to show the French if they should come.

The *papier* was written and given and we disappeared into the depths of the Forest, where, by a running stream, we built a fire and made our tea—at least the most competent of us did, while the rest were hewers of wood and drawers of water.

Those afternoons were very beautiful in the haunted forest—every German forest is haunted—with the birds singing and nothing else to break the silence but the ping-ping from the French rifle-range which was some distance away.

When we returned our driver assured us that he had been visited by five French patrols, who would, without doubt, have slain him if it had not been for the *papier* of the *offizier*. Behind the rolling eyes and uplifted hands we heard again the voice of a fainting delight: "Och, thim's the divil's lads."

We saw all the events that were to be seen that good Summer: Races; Horse Shows; a Torch-light Tattoo; all manner of festas and sports. Everywhere were the Germans. I can remember now that night of stillness in Lindenthal broken only when the bands played; dark grass underfoot and leaves and the stars overhead, and now and again the twitter of a frightened bird. One might have been in a midnight forest, while the torches met and twined in a

strange ghostly dance of light and colour. The people about you were invisible in the darkness and only whispered now and again to each other. There was real beauty and mystery in that Torchlight Tattoo : but when the fireworks followed it was strange to see as they leaped in the sky the upturned German faces outside the enclosure, myriads of them it seemed.

They crowded the Races, too. I cannot remember them at the Horse Show. Perhaps they were not admitted, beyond the German Police, who took part in the events and were on excellent terms with the British Military Police, with whom they kept the peace of the town.

It was the 1922 Horse Show when General Dégoutte came in with the British Commander-in-Chief to the tea given by the Signals Corps. I happened to meet him in the narrow hall as I went out, and was struck by the quick, light eagerness of his step and movement. One might almost say he sprinted. In full dress the French Army officer is rather splendid ; he is fortunate in his blue uniform, so much more becoming than the terrible scarlet of the English.

We shared the German amusements, visiting the *cabarets*, where you had a very good dinner while the entertainment was going on. I was not very much impressed by the *cabaret* comic artists, though, to judge by the roars of laughter with which they were received, they must have been very amusing.

There was always a good pianist or violinist or both. Sometimes the artists of the Opera sing at the *cabarets* for profit. The humour was, I understand, sometimes of a doubtful kind ; but the German families did not seem to object to that, and it passed us by : we were not sufficiently familiar with German to be offended.

The Schauspielhaus, where Shakespeare and Shaw are played in German, drove us out by its lack of ventilation. It is interesting as showing how Germany looks to her people that there are free performances once a week or so at the Schauspielhaus, to which foreigners are not admitted : and on Sunday there is the children's performance. There are cinemas and *Bier-gartens* and *Bier-halles*, and everywhere there is music. You could enjoy the Opera without paying for it any day at all, if you chose to promenade up and down one of those streets, all named from musicians at the back of the Opera House, where, when it is fine enough for open windows, you may hear all the stars of the Opera rehearsing.

The Opera is perhaps the only place in Cologne except the public conveyances where Germans and English sit side by side. It is a very gay sight, especially on a gala night, when the Balkon is filled with the scarlet of the British officers' mess-jackets and the evening dress of their ladies. There are places reserved, of course, for the big-wigs of the Occupation, but beside even these personages, divided only by a cord, may be the Germans.

I imagine that a good many English people go to the Opera without really enjoying the music. There are Wagner nights when the Opera may begin at 5 and end at 11.30. Of course, you dine in the intervals, which helps those who have not got the fire as the Germans have it; and on the whole they disguise their boredom, when they are bored, very well. I have known young British officers to spend their evenings in the restaurant or the *foyer* when there was a Wagner Opera. There is even a story of a famous General who, the curtains of his box being indiscreetly drawn aside, was revealed with his legs upon a chair, luxuriously reading the *Times*.

The properties of the Cologne Opera House are very magnificent, and the lighting wonderful, the finest lighting in Europe, they say. You might be stone deaf and yet enjoy the Opera at Cologne, because of the beautiful lighting. The sunrise over Rome in "Tosca" is something that will not fade out of my memory, nor will the snowy dawn, in which Paris reveals herself slowly, of "La Bohème," the blossom and blue and golden skies of "Madama Butterfly," to say nothing of the magnificent effects in the "Fliegende Hollander," the "Valkyrie," "Tannhäuser" and the rest of the Wagnerian Cycle.

Another pleasure for the eye was the ballet. The *prima donna*, or the *jeune premier*, might be, and often was, over-bulky for his or her part, but with the ballet there was no fault to find. I remember the

ballet in "Carmen" which danced like the flowers, with a natural joy in the dancing; and there was the wonderful dumb-show of "Joseph," with its strange simplicity that made it like a mediæval miracle-play.

Cologne was, indeed, a paradise for the lover of music and the Opera.

Sometimes on Sundays in the Summer and Autumn we went into the country side by side with the Wander-Vögel. At least we disgorged with them from a crowded train and we met them again as we returned home, but the woods and forests about Cologne have an incredible way of swallowing up any number of people, so that if you had not the evidence of your eyes you might believe there was no one abroad but yourself.

I have said, I think, that the German railways were run to give employment, not for profit. As the mark ramped nearer its extinction even the pretence of profit disappeared. On those Autumn Sundays when we fared forth from Köln-Deutsch station to the enchanted places the pretence of payment had ceased. The fare was nominally 500 marks. With the mark in milliards 500 marks was an unobtainable sum. It was as though they asked for the thousandth-part of a farthing. I do not know if the Germans attempted to pay. We went through the barrier, and no one said us nay. I do not think those hourly trains from Köln-Deutsch to Rosrath and Overath were inconveniently crowded. The

mystery was—there were always mysteries in Germany—that the white trams, which charged on a rising scale, a fare that might be reckoned as quite a serious matter to the Germans, were suffocatingly and intolerably crowded.

Rosrath is about eight miles from Cologne, beyond Königsforst, in the Frankenforst. All those forest stations are perfectly heavenly. You alight in the heart of, or on the edge of, the Forest, just like the pictures in the fairy-tales.

The Wander-Vögel were very picturesque, all singing and twanging their guitars. They came home of evenings laden with heather, manipulated into the shapes of lifebuoys or hearts or something else, slung about their necks. They are extraordinarily clever in manipulating the heather. We used to buy delicious baskets woven of it from little boys in the streets, who seemed agreeably surprised when anybody wanted their delightful wares. We once bought two such baskets most cunningly made, from two little boys sheltering under a portico from the rain. We gave them the equivalent of two shillings for each, to their bewilderment and delight.

The Wander-Vögel were extremely civil and friendly; if you asked your way they would come some distance with you to put you right, or if you asked the time of a train they would take pains to find it out for you. They were very pleasant to look at, being sun-browned and healthy, with a richness

of colouring very unlike the pale, middle-aged; middle-class German. Somehow the country and the forests made a fitting background for their picturesqueness.

We never went very far from the station for our picnics. Sometimes an old woodman came by, or you might see one or two quiet persons strolling along a forest path. For the rest there were only the birds; not the hares which spring up under your feet as you walk in the fields beyond Lindenthal, nor the partridges which come almost within reach of the houses at Riehl, but the small wise singing-birds.

Through the forests there were here and there hanging ladders by which you climbed to a platform in a tree from which some particularly choice bit of scenery was visible.

The countryside was so quiet and friendly. Once we left our companion, who was very tired after a hot strenuous week in camp, to guard the picnic-basket while we went for a walk. We were absent about an hour and returned to find him fast asleep just between the open field and the forest. It seemed so strange to see him there in the defencelessness of sound sleep, the young khaki-clad figure, face upward to the skies, in this "enemy" country. The attitude frightened one with a memory of the myriads of khaki-clad figures that had lain so—in the endless unanswering sleep.

Neither the spirits of the forest nor the people

had hurt him, would hurt him. He might have belonged to Germany, so sweetly did he sleep.

We used to go home at evening in a train full of singing, which reached us in our military compartment ; across the tranquil fields back to the Rhine and the twin towers of the Dom.

On a wet Sunday evening the Hohestrasse used to be full of drenched Wander-Vögel, the girls in their light Summer dresses, clinging wetly to them, the young men bare-headed and bare-throated, twanging away on the guitars and singing as though immune from the ills of the flesh. It was true indeed that in Cologne rheumatism was not, nor were colds. It had a strange immunity. In the wettest weather one never needed to "air" one's clothes. I had listened incredulously when my Frau said at our first coming : "In England you air clothes, in Germany not." Living with wide-open windows, in drenching rain, we found that our sponges and washing-gloves were dry as a bone after a few hours. There was much complaint of *malaise* among the British Occupation. Of serious illness one seldom heard.

CHAPTER XXII

THE END

THE Occupying Army, which had been swelled by the regiments coming back from Silesia in the Summer of 1922, went back by degrees to its first modest dimensions. In April, 1923, the Deutsches Theatre, which had been kept going for the Rhine Army for four years by the genius and energy of Esmé Percy, closed its doors. Mr. Percy went home to assist Mr. Basil Dean and to delight London audiences by his acting as he had delighted a few discriminating among his audiences at Cologne.

I am not very much of a playgoer. I became one in Cologne, where I learnt that the English stage possessed at least one actor of genius ; I do not use the word lightly.

Mr. Percy played with a company of amateurs, sometimes good, sometimes bad, occasionally reinforced by a professional from London. He had a way of informing even inferior actors with his energy, so that many of the performances were extremely good—none could be negligible in which he himself took a part. His driving force was amazing. The performances varied with every week, so that while

his team was producing one new play it was rehearsing another, and this went on for four long years ! Only his tremendous driving force could have done it. He was very ambitious, too. Far from him was it to produce the slight and the ephemeral play. His amateurs had to break their teeth on Wilde, on Shaw, on Dunsany ; on the best modern English plays. There were no failures. The only failure was in the audience, which grew less and less as the Army of Occupation dwindled. The Army of Occupation at 8000 enjoyed or did not enjoy the generous scale of amusement planned for the Army of 400,000, that came in after the Armistice : it was over-amused. The situation was not possible.

Let me record that Mr. Percy, in " A Bill of Divorcement," made me weep—made me forget everything but the wretched husband pleading for his life, and more than his life, and being refused. It was a long time since a stage-play had been more than a stage-play to me. He made it a harrowing reality.

He went, and with him much of pleasure and artistic gratification was gone ; and when the time came to go like all of us he hated going. Yet the good days of Cologne for the strangers were over. I do not talk only of the cheapness : that was but one aspect of it. The good days were when the people were pleased with us.

Not only did the mark rush madly downward from June, 1923, with an ever-increasing velocity, but the Germans had ceased to regard the British

as their saviours and protectors. Their confidence had been childlike : their resentment was equally so. I am afraid that with our policy of non-intervention where they had expected intervention, the prestige of England had rushed down in the German mind with a precipitancy equal to that of the falling mark. It was said at one time that the Germans were playing for an Anglo-German Alliance. I do not know what was being thought and said in Berlin, but in the Rhineland it was obvious that the people thought they had been let down. It would be part of their character that they would believe what they wished to believe.

There were the French, not only harassing the Ruhr, but flouting the British. The friendship with our Allies, such as it was, had grown very thin. They were pressing closer and closer on the British Zone. One day at Ohligs we waited some hours for a train to Cologne. All the express trains were being held up to be searched by the French at Vohwinckel. The Germans had been accustomed to lay the blame for everything on the French. If you wanted anything and it was not forthcoming, it was always the *Franzosen*. Now at the Army Canteen, if there was something lacking, it was always the French : and doubtless it was so. More and more the Rhine was crowded with smokeless vessels, tied up there, while beyond them, in the fairway, the little boats of the Rhine Flotilla, flying the Union Jack, puffed gaily up and down.

The attitude of the people had changed noticeably. There was no longer the gaiety of old. They who had been so ready to laugh with you had grown strangely solemn. Their eyes were remote, pre-occupied.

I commented on the fact one day to a Colonel of the Occupation.

"They are counting the marks," he said.

By that time the marks were past counting. I turn up my diary for August-September-October, 1923, in which I made brief notes of money paid out to my Frau for food. The entries begin on the 17th August. Up to that time there had been weekly payments. The first entry is 10 milliards. The last on the 30th of October, 200 milliards.

They were counting the marks. That Colonel, by the way, liked the Germans, as the men of the Occupation usually did. From the men there were courtesies and hospitalities to their hosts in the billets. That class was the most hardly-hit. The Baron So-and-So might not taste meat or have a full meal for a week unless his guest asked him to share a meal, which the guest usually did. I suppose a soldier salutes a soldier. The ladies of the Occupation preserved the animosities as do the ladies at home. The men had forgotten to talk about Huns.

I thought I discovered that part at least of the attitude of the ladies, apart from their inherent conservatism, was because they were much more intimately up against the Germans in the billets than

the men, and difficulties and misunderstandings arose. One lady told me that when she first came to a certain billet the owners of the billet had sent her flowers and fruit from their garden. "I did not want their flowers and fruit," she said. "I could have got them for myself." The women I found were usually distrustful of the good will of the Germans: they thought it a matter of policy. It certainly did seem an unlikely, an incomprehensible thing that friendship of the Germans, yet, personally, I had no doubt of its genuineness.

The queues in the banks were enormous—they had always been enormous—and there were times of scarcity of marks. One began to lose count of the money, and to stare helplessly when a certain sum was named. Even the practised cashiers began to feel it, I think. We had said from time to time: "It cannot go on like this," but it went further and further. There seemed no reason why the exchange should not go beyond any man's counting. Still in the Banks there sat those, chiefly women, who had gambled when the mark was at eighty and in the hundreds and thousands, saying, as we said: "It cannot go on like this." Many of them came every day, as though they could not help it, to look at the mark rushing onward to destruction.

We had given up asking how the people lived. Those who had food to sell were doing very well, and the country was holding up its food for higher prices. "It will be a war between the Country and

the Town," said the dentist, who held his instrument like a violin, and went on to explain how it was that the people crowded the trams when we had begun to walk. It was to save shoe-leather, which had become prohibitive in price; and what was the use of saving the mark when to-morrow it was worthless? We knew that point of view. One only got enough marks to last for the day: if there was a surplus one ran to spend it.

The Ruhr had become stale. The people had grown accustomed to the inevitable. No longer did the walls blossom out in leaflets against the French, as they had done all Summer: an engine lying on its side, a train smashed to matchwood: figures indicating the numbers killed by the Régie trains up to date. "If you want to be killed like that use the Régie trains." The long list of reasons why the French should not be forgiven. Such things had vanished, but one day we saw a notice that the Russian Soviet would distribute bread to its starving brothers in Cologne on such and such mornings at appointed hours and places. We went to one place just behind the Dom. Long queues stretched along the pavement, out into the street, waiting for the dole of bread.

Once I saw outside the Reichsbank a lorry-load of 20,000 mark notes, piled high, on top of which sat a German working-man, his legs crossed, smoking a cigarette. I suppose they were going to be destroyed. People began to tear up marks in the

street and on the country roads, as we had heard it of Austria, only that the German conditions were a great deal worse.

Sometimes the fluctuations of the mark were extraordinary. There was a week in September, or early October, when the mark suddenly recovered and the prices still soared. The Occupation paid ten shillings a pound for its butter and meat that week and consternation reigned. The next week prices were down again.

Someone behind the scenes was always juggling with the mark and the prices. My Frau said it was the Jews.

"When they have a festival," she said, "the prices do not go up."

During the Summer a friend of ours had taken his wife to Wiesbaden to consult a specialist on rheumatism or heart-trouble. He was *the* specialist of Germany. My friend found the simple great man several miles away from Wiesbaden. His patients had to go to him since he would not use the Régie trains. He said: "The education of Germany is gone out. When we are gone there will be no more education. All the students are in the factories."

Like Dr. Jung, the fee he asked had been infinitesimal. Certainly German simplicity is not all assumed.

When my friend protested, insisting on paying him a sum more in accordance with what he would pay an ordinary doctor at home the professor said: "If you would be so very kind . . . clothes are

beyond my means to buy. We are of a size. If you ever have clothes to give away . . .”

These were the heart-breaking things. Poverty was having its effect on the morals of the people. Those who had been brought up by honest parents stole. Servants generally were very dishonest, yet one knew from the old people one dealt with that the Rhinelanders of the old generation were, as an American would say, too honest to live. You went into a shop in a poor street and bought, from an old man looking like Rip Van Winkle, something at a price which could repay no one. Some of the old perhaps were unconscious of how the mark had gone out.

There was a night when we had waited long for one of the express trains the French were holding up. We arrived in Cologne late for all our engagements, which included dinner, the Opera and a dance. It was after nine and our guests were bidden for 7.45. Fortunately at the last moment we had cut out the Opera. The dance should begin at 10 and end at 12.30.

It was spilling rain when we got to Cologne, and there was not a trace of any kind of vehicle. It took us some time to discover that the taxis had gone on strike. Taxi-strikes in Cologne usually fell on Friday night, which was dance night at the Club.

We commended silently our guests to each other—they were perfect strangers—and waited under the dripping portico of the railway-station while our male companion scoured the streets so wildly in the

dark for a taxi that he collided with a German and all but killed him. The German pedestrian seems congenitally incapable of looking where he is going, in which incapacity he is more than matched by the German cyclist.

When we had arrived at the point of despair there loomed out of the wet darkness a monstrous black shape with a couple of flickering candles to either side of it. It might have been a hearse, but it was not. It was a pre-historic cab with a pre-historic driver. One wondered how it had reached such a flickering intelligence as his that business was afoot for him and his decrepit horse and cab in Cologne streets that night.

We hailed him joyfully and got into the mouldy cab, which conveyed us quite safely home. There had been no profiteering obviously in his underground world—he must have come from the shades—for the fare he asked us was one penny.

I was never moved to stern indignation at the pilfering of the maid-servants. In their place I should have pilfered; but, of course, it was a tragic thing that they should have been driven to dishonesty. Their wages were miserable. It would have taken a year's wages to buy a coat. No wonder they had to steal. But in another way morals had suffered, as morals always must suffer through extreme poverty. In this case it was not a matter of exchange and barter, though that was common. A very pretty girl who used to render me personal services, in a reply to a

question about a ring she was wearing, told me that she was married. I gave her a special tip for "the little home." She explained to me that she and her husband were living in one room since lodgings were so difficult to get. I asked if there were any children and she shook her head.

Some time later I had her again to attend to me. A question as to how the home was going on elicited the information that, the one room having proved too small, she now lived in a little hotel while her husband still occupied the room.

A little later I saw her again and asked after the home. She answered amazingly: "Marriage is very good for a year or eighteen months. After that, not."

Telling this to a very astute German as something humorous he said unexpectedly: "Are you sure she was married?"

He went on to say that since marriage was impossible to many because of poverty and the housing difficulty, these temporary unions had become increasingly common. I had had no doubt about the marriage before, but as he spoke I was suddenly aware that the girl was not married. She had not spoken as a married woman, although I had not detected it at the time.

So—poverty is at the root of most evils. I remembered a room in a West of Ireland house and someone talking—a lean, ascetic priest who comforted his loneliness with books and thinking. From

our quiet, morning talks I learned more of the baffling, the mysterious people than I had known in all my life before.

“It is not among the very poor that one looks for virtues,” he said. “Their life is too hard to grow virtues in. They have all they can do merely to exist. It is in the class which is just comfortable, with not much to spare beyond that, that virtues grow.”

So—my Lady Poverty walked Umbrian hills amid a thousand beauties, under a warm sun, where one wanted but a handful of polenta and a few dried grapes to live. Poverty is apt to be sluttish and ignorant in the factories and the toppling houses. Too many of these pitiable girls were anybody’s victim who would.

So—the German poverty has destroyed education. The poverty has destroyed thrift, it has broken down all the old laws and sanctities.

How long will it take Germany to recover these? It is as when ground has been reclaimed in ages of effort and then left to Nature who has taken back again all that was hers, the weed and the seed.

THE END



